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FBIS-EEU-91-054 *20 March 1991*

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Italian Aid To Arrive; 'Calm' Distribution Urged

AU1803203891 Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian 1900 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Statement issued by the Council of Minsters' Press and Information Directorate; place and date not given]

[Text] The humanitarian aid the Italian Government has agreed to give our country will start to arrive tomorrow. The Council of Ministers, through the ministries and other bodies, has taken measures to ensure the fast and fair distribution of the food and medicines that will come. All the food and medicines to be sent by the Italian side as part of this aid will be supplied free of charge. The costs of unloading and transportation to consumers as well as other expenses will be borne by the state. Nurseries, kindergartens, hospitals, old people's homes, asylums, and children's homes will be given priority in obtaining these goods. After meeting the needs of these institutions, the shipments that remain will be distributed free to the people. On the government's instruction, a civil commission has been created including representatives of various populated areas and specialists, who will supervise the enforcement of these instructions and the distribution of the aid. The Domestic Trade Ministry has also organized a meeting of representatives of political parties, who learned of and agreed to the criteria that have been laid down and the creation of this commission.

The first shipment of aid arrives tomorrow. According to reports from the Italian side, it consists of cooking oil, chicken, canned peas, fruit juice, jam, and medicines. These goods will be delivered to representatives of the Domestic Trade Ministry, the Health Ministry, and the Education Ministry. The relevant bodies have adopted measures to speedily unload the food and medicines and to transport them to their destinations. Other shipments of goods will continue to arrive in the next few days.

Bearing in mind the events of a few days ago, the government calls on citizens and all political forces to help to ensure that the unloading, transportation, and distribution of the goods takes place in order and calm, because this is an important time for stabilizing the country's life. Alongside measures taken by the forces for the maintenance of order, everybody should dissociate themselves from and oppose those who seized ships, looters, and elements seeking to create turmoil and confusion.

The Council of Ministers' Press and Information Directorate.

Prospects for National Democracy Examined

AU2003084391 Tirana DRITA in Albanian 10 Mar 91 pp 2-3

[Fatos Kongoli article: "Reflections on a New Reality"]

[Text] In the pluralist era that we have entered, regardless of which political force will win the people's trust in the 31 March elections and shoulder the burden of controlling the country, our society will inevitably undergo intense processes of transformation. It has become commonplace to say that these changes, which are itemized in the parties' electoral programs, will lead us toward Europe; however, Albanians have recently spilt Albanian blood. We almost went toward fratricidal butchery rather than toward Europe, and at the moment no one can reassure us that such a disaster has been finally averted. In this situation, which is a reflection of the country's grave economic and political crisis, nothing good can be expected unless an effort is made to uproot the factors that caused the crisis, although one is aware that this is only a first step toward solving it.

The factors that led us to such straits—i.e. to the brink of self-destruction—and that unfortunately still operate are deeply rooted. It is a matter for professionals to define and analyze them. Each one of us, however, has been under unrelenting pressure for decades on end to make politics an inseparable part of life and existence, under the slogan: "Politics to the fore." We should, therefore, not complain if Albanians—on the threshold of the 31 March elections, even though they in general eat badly, work badly, and are in a worse state of mind than ever—are more sensitive today than ever to politics, discuss politics endlessly, and are faced with major quandaries as they turn their eyes toward an unsentimental Europe.

The community of the East, with its Stalinist and totalitarian system until the fifties, which it later tried to modify with assorted reforms, ended in a fiasco. It was a virtually universal collapse. For a time, we tried to dissociate ourselves from it, portraying it as a failure of others that had nothing to do with us. This illusion was quickly dispelled when the economic crisis, into which we had been walking blindfolded for years, led to total stagnation and showed that our country too had suffered the same fate, if not a worse and more dramatic one, even though it apparently had nothing in common with the countries of Eastern Europe and was even ideologically hostile to them. The fiasco was worse because, even at the best of times, we had not distinguished ourselves economically. It was more dramatic because no other nation of the East experienced or could experience such a severe psychic trauma as the Albanian people. Even after the fall of the Berlin Wall, events in our country could have taken a different turn if the bureaucratic hierarchy of the time, which was isolated from the masses and had become a conservative force, had not become an obstacle to the frank discussion of the truth; if it had openly admitted its mistakes in time and had called them by their true name; and if it had urgently taken certain necessary measures to create the basis for a new unity. It lived in a closed world with its disgusting privileges, however, warming itself at the ashes of its former glories. It had lost common sense and a sense of reality. Under such circumstances, the seething cauldron boiled over in the events of 2 July last year. Since then, there have been major, positive changes; however, we are faced with an apparently paradoxical fact. The more thoroughly the process of democratization is carried out, the more domestic tensions

rise. Logically, one would expect that the student movement of last December and the announcement of the decree permitting the formation of other political parties—in other words, political pluralism—would have pacified the situation. The opposite occurred, however. With the formation of opposition parties, social tensions not only did not abate, but rose at breathtaking speed, leading to the events of 20 February and the horrific days that followed. Do what we may, we cannot avoid a difficult and contradictory conclusion: These tensions, which did not appear overnight and were not accidental, were an expression of the discontent that had accumulated over so many years, a discontent that the bureaucracy was too inert to comprehend, too clumsy to consider, and too incompetent to solve.

With the emergence of the opposition, we are presented with a totally different and more complex picture compared with that of three months ago.

To avoid tensions, quarrels, bad feelings, and an atavistic spirit of revenge, we must understand and be aware of what this new reality represents for us Albanians. If we do not do this now, on the threshold of the elections, and of course after them, it will be difficult to find another way of preventing us from doing what nobody wants. In practice, we are living in a pluralist system, and political pluralism—as it is often defined—is the level of civilization at which no ideology can claim to express the aspirations of the whole of society, but in which, on the contrary, a competition of the most varied ideologies aids progress. If we do not understand this, and if we do not try to understand this, we will go nowhere but toward a confrontation in which we Albanians will be the sole losers.

In our case, pluralism is a freshly planted sapling; a suitable climate must be created for it if it is to survive. The only suitable climate is democracy. The bitter winds of February showed again in the most blatant way that we are a long way from such a climate. There are destabilizing forces whose existence is indubitable; however, they still remain mysterious, under the name of "dark forces." Parties hasten to dissociate themselves from them, so these forces remain anonymous, shrouded in darkness and, therefore, threatening and dangerous. They are the exclusive field of professionals, so we turn our eyes to what we can see in the daylight.

It seems that many misunderstandings and dramatic consequences have arisen from the fact that, from the start, when the opposition parties took the stage, broad sections of society were caught by surprise, did not understand, and still do not understand the significance of this fact. Both before and after the legalization of pluralism, there were and still are voices claiming that our people are unprepared for this level of civilization and that, because of the lack of a recent tradition, they will not be able to exploit the advantages of the democratic climate. The outbursts of conflict that have taken place and the situation, sometimes flaring up and sometimes calming down, have been taken as arguments to prove this. Although there is an element of truth in this argument, it is lamentable to see the sins of different political forces with their occasionally infantile level of democratic emancipation being laid at the door of the people, in whose name everybody talks. This is not to mention the machinations of anonymous, destabilizing forces.

The opposition, which started with the formation of the Democratic Party [PDSh], gathered in the different parties with unimaginable speed the whole gamut of opposition forces that had long been in latent existence. The opposition press emerged with the same speed, and is, as we know, devoured. Never in the past has the press been read with as much interest as now; however, many people do not understand that the emergence of the opposition was not and is not a ploy to overcome a certain situation. It was a necessity of the times, dictated by powerful domestic and foreign factors; it is to his credit that Comrade Ramiz Alia in particular considered these objectively. The opposition was born from the need to create the genuine and stable democracy that we all claim so loudly to want. Then why is the crisis worsening? In my view, the answer is that there is a lack of tolerance. There is a lack of tolerance because, among other things, there is a lack of mutual trust. This trust is lacking because the various political forces have evidently provided no grounds for it.

There will, of course, be disagreements and mutual criticism, even of a harsh and bitter kind, because the opposition did not arise for cosmetic purposes. It is in the logic of this feverish electoral campaign that everybody should work out his own strategy and tactics, defending himself when he needs to and attacking when he thinks fit. I hope I am not offending anybody when I say that the Albanian Workers Party [PPSh], despite its reformed program, is in a difficult position in this campaign purely because it has been the sole ruling party for 46 years on end. The other parties carry nothing in their government baggage but programs. Moreover, where they have plenty of room to criticize serious mistakes, the PPSh has no such advantage. The criticisms leveled against the opposition's programs remain in the last analysis hypothetical. Presently, these programs exist only on paper. This is a most delicate moment. In the last two or three months, a gradual, ever faster and more extreme polarization has arisen among the electorate. In normal elections, it is normal for voters to become polarized according to their political allegiances; however, our 31 March elections are not all that normal. They will be the first truly free and democratic elections for many decades. If our electorate is highly polarized and electrified by their opposing views, let us not continue to electrify it further. This is in the hands of the most powerful parties. There is no reason why the goodwill of the parties to reach a prudent understanding,

which they often assert, a will that essentially supplies a common denominator among the large groups they represent and who make up the overwhelming majority of the populace, should not triumph over dark, destabilizing forces. As one follows events and the press, however, a bitter taste often enters one's mouth, which leads to despair. One becomes bewild red, does not know what is happening, and loses heart. In the end, this creates a sense of insecurity, not to say panic.

Whoever follows events with a citizen's concern cannot fail to notice that the ultras at present pose a major peril. Of whatever hue they may be, they favor violence. Each from their own positions, whether consciously or not, they support the divisive class struggle that until recently did us so much harm. There is a common impression, however, that "the ultras" are incarnate in certain persons who commit acts of vandalism. Such "ultras" exist, and in my view are not guided by any political principle. They pose a danger to society because, being beyond the control of the parties, they are able to destroy, cause offense, and use violence. From what I have noticed, such irresponsible forces are unfortunately sometimes frankly and sometimes indirectly held to be groups of the PDSh, which vigorously disowns them. This is a problem that provokes serious misunderstanding. Such behavior is associated with laying dynamite under an opponent's apartment, not to mention the brandishing of weapons and so forth, with incalculable psychological effects.

Let us be realistic. The country is passing through a very serious and confused situation. As recent months have shown, this situation has often become uncontrollable; however, is it genuinely uncontrollable? When he sees what is happening, the ordinary citizen finds it impossible to answer this question that troubles him every day. The hemorrhage of 2 July last year caused a national trauma. There was a great deal of speculation, but the event remains shrouded in mystery even today. The flights across the northern and southern borders, especially the latter, then followed, and thousands and thousands of people abandoned the homeland. It is said that entire villages in the south are deserted. Now we have been faced with the mass flights across the sea, which strangely took place without any difficulties at our ports. Then there was a tragic repeat of the attempts to enter the embassies. One asks who is organizing these things. There can be no doubt that someone is organizing them. Whose criminal hand (or hands) is trying to destroy our homeland? The embassy incidents occurred in precisely the same way as on 2 July last year, except that this time the embassies took a different view of the escapees, dissuading them. It is clear that circles exist within and outside Albania that do not want Albania's democratization and stability and who would not sleep in peace if democracy were to triumph in Albania. Unfortunately, large crowds of people fall victim to such machinations. As they depart for economic or other different reasons, which are hard to conceive as being political, they involuntarily do colossal harm to the country on the threshold of the elections. There is no way in which internal tensions can fail to rise, a situation that is exploited for perverted purposes by extremists who spread all kinds of rumors.

Another serious mistake still being committed in various ways is to think of the opposite party as a party of "ultras," in which the line of the "ultras" prevails. This is not and cannot be true; otherwise, there no force would be able to avert a catastrophe. We all hope and trust, however, that prudence will prevail. Now, on the threshold of the new millennium, it is a genuine sign of barbarism among us if, when we do not, for example, agree with communist ideas, we turn this disagreement into a pathological hatred of communists who, first and foremost, are Albanians. On the other hand, it is equally barbaric to consider your noncommunist ideological opponent of whatever party as nothing but a worthy candidate for reprisals. In a democratic and pluralist system, which we all claim to support, there is no place for the logic that claims that I am entirely right and you are entirely wrong. The perverted logic that permits the use of violence by anybody for whatever motives is also very shortsighted and destined to fail.

This does not mean that the democratic confrontation of parties will stop. Each has its own program and has the right to strive by democratic means to realize it. In this sense, nobody can accuse anybody else of careerist ambitions, or a wish to seize or cling to an armchair, because such accusations can very easily rebound on oneself. Elementary logic shows that when a party emerges with a program that enjoys the support of broad sections of the people, even if not of all the people, because this is impossible, it will no doubt try to create conditions to enact it. This is only possible if it wins the elections and takes over the reins of the country, in other words gains power. When one party loses, another one necessarily wins, and one party assumes the power the other party has lost. It is well known that this transfer of power is accompanied by appropriate, utterly normal changes, such as a change of the cabinet. In the civilized world toward which we wish to advance, this is a quite usual thing that does not cause the slightest surprise to anybody. Perhaps it relatively threatens the interests of individuals, but not those of the people. The interests of the people cannot be represented by a single party, and still less can they be defended by a single party if this party sometimes wins and sometimes loses power. These interests can only be protected and regulated by a law-governed state, in which everybody is equal under the law, in which the Army, the forces for the maintenance of order, the investigators, etc. are instruments of the state in defense of the interests of the homeland and citizens, not the interests of parties, and where there is a pluralist legislature elected by the free will of the people. Therefore, let us set aside our squabbles, egoism, complexes, and party passions, and create for the people the opportunity to go to the polls in peace, with clear heads and confidence in the future. In this way, we will gain the respect of the world, which is waiting with curiosity to see how we Albanians will approach 31 March and what we will decide on this historic day.

Media Representatives on Elections, Opposition

AU1903213791 Budapest BESZELO in Hungarian 16 Mar 91 pp 32, 33

[Interview with Taip Sulko, editor of Radio Tirana's Hungarian-language programs, and Bujar Muharremi, international affairs reporter at Tirana Television, by Akos Gabor Toth in Budapest; date not given: "To the Sea, Albanians!"—first paragraph is BESZELO introduction]

[Excerpts] It is as though they were trying to outbid their Illyrian ancestors: Thousands of Albanians have been taking to the sea these past few days. It is not belligerence that draws them to Italian soil; they are driven to Italy by Albania's poverty—unique in Europe—and by the lack of the most elementary goods and services. Political analysts observe this sudden exodus with surprise, given that Albania is openly preparing for free, democratic multiparty elections, and the change of regime looks as though it will be spared of bloodshed. Is it just aspirations toward the easier life shown on Italian television that drives Albanians so far from home? Or is it a disbelief in real political changes, an uncertainty about President Ramiz Alia and his reforms? We interviewed Taip Sulko and Bujar Muharremi, who arrived in Budapest only a few days ago.

[Toth] Please tell us about the current political parties in Albania.

[Sulko/Muharremi] Five parties need to be mentioned. The Albanian Workers' Party [PPSh], currently in power, has about 130,000-140,000 members at the moment, although an increasing number of members are leaving. The party membership is divided, but the conservatives cannot really hinder President Ramiz Alia's reforms, which are aimed at introducing a market economy. The Democratic Party [PDSh] is the largest opposition party in Albania; its membership totals some 80,000 people. The PDSh is mainly popular among students, intellectuals, and young workers. Its aim is to introduce a Western-style democracy and to carry out a complete land-privatization scheme. The Republican Party's [PRSh] platform is essentially similar to that, although the republicans are less radical, they foresee slower and more gradual changes. The PRSh is a typical party of the intelligentsia. That also applies to the Green Party, which is not taking part in the fight for power. The Green Party's program is essentially marked by aspirations toward social harmony and environmental protection. So far, its membership is rather small. The youngest party in Albania is the Agrarian Party [PA], the party with the fastest growing membership. The PA hopes to be the spokesman of all villagers in Albania—that is, 65 percent of the entire population. Its popularity is growing.

[Toth] What chances do these parties stand at the elections?

[Sulko/Muharremi] Even though their memberships are on the rise, the opposition parties will probably have to form a coalition to stand a chance against the PPSh. Many people, particularly the elderly, hope that the government party will undergo a renewal. [passage omitted]

[Toth] How is the role of the Army, the police, and the secret service changing? Can these institutions be separated from the PPSh?

[Sulko/Muharremi] These bodies should be depoliticized as soon as possible. The opposition press is following events very closely. A legal decree will probably be issued very soon in this area, even before the elections. [passage omitted]

[Toth] Please tell us about the role of the radio and television during Albania's electoral campaign.

[Sulko/Muharremi] To this very day, the radio, the television, and the news agency are subordinate to the government. Nevertheless, the three institutions try to create the same conditions for all the parties making their statements. News conferences and electoral campaign programs are uniformly limited to one hour on the air.

[Toth] Who are the Albanian extremists? What relations do the authorities and the opposition have with these extremists?

[Sulko/Muharremi] We can talk about both right-wing and left-wing extremists. These forces advocate an armed overthrow of the current regime, and the population does have a lot of arms, so these forces may bring about the danger of a real civil war. The Army and the police do not use weapons—that way, they cannot give excuse to an uprising. [passage omitted]

[Toth] Given that there is general economic decline in the country, it must have been quite difficult to launch an opposition press. The press cannot really survive merely on meager monthly party allowances. Please tell us a little bit about the most important opposition newspapers.

[Sulko/Muharremi] The circulation of the most important opposition newspapers is almost on a par with the government party newspaper ZERI I POPULLIT. Even though the opposition newspapers cost almost three times as much, they are sold in a matter of minutes. It is to be noted that the RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE only appears on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and the REPUBLIKA only appears on Thursdays and Sundays. In the heated atmosphere of the electoral campaign, even old pro-government newspapers like the People's Front's BASHKIMI have started to adopt a more daring tone. It seems that the market economy has already started functioning in the area of newspaper distribution and sale....

PPSh, PRSh, PDSh Hold Electoral Meetings

AU1903211091

[Editorial Report] Tirana Domestic Service in Albanian at 1900 GMT on 19 March devotes five minutes of its regular 30-minute newscast to reports on electoral meetings organized by political parties.

The Albanian Workers' Party [PPSh] is reported to have organized an aktiv to discuss its electoral program, addressed by Harilla Papajorgji, who "focused on the issue of the market economy and different forms of property." On the subject of agrarian policy, Papajorgji is reported as stating that the PPSh's program is based on "cooperation, not privatizing the land, and encouraging the kind of work in the countryside that brings the highest earnings and incomes in order to continually increase rural prosperity."

The Republican Party [PRSh] is reported to have held its first Diber District conference in Peshkopi. Hysen Cobani, member of the PRSh's Initiating Commission, is reported as saying: "I have no need to describe the geography of Diber, because it is the land of the Kastriotis, who, led by Skenderbeg, withstood the Ottoman hordes and barbarians for 25 years on end, preventing them from penetrating Europe." The PRSh also announced its candidates for the six constituencies of Diber District.

The Democratic Party [PDSh] is reported to have held a meeting with residents of various districts of the city of Shkoder. Azem Hajdari, member of the PDSh's Managing Commission, is reported as saying: "The economy must be reformed as soon as possible and transformed from the socialist command economy system to a free market economy. This is the only alternative."

The PDSh is also reported to have organized a rally on Victory Square in Fier. Viktor Margilaj, chairman of the PDSh's Fier branch, is reported as saying: "It is important to understand that, although we have different political allegiances, we are Albanians." Eduard Selami, secretary of the PDSh's Managing Commission is reported as saying that "The PDSh's electoral program aims to bring Albania into Europe as soon as possible. We seek to use effectively the fruitful experience of the countries of Western Europe."

'Vampire' Leka I Rises 'In Search of His Prey'

AU1803214991 Tirana BASHKIMI in Albanian 11 Mar 91 p 4

[Sazan Korabi article: "A 'King' Seeks... A Throne"]

[Text] "Once upon a time there was a king...." This is how children's fairy tales begin.

"Once upon a time there was an Albanian king!" who was set to work by various international "grandmas" equipped with radio and television stations and an up-to-date press, who tried to capture the imagination of a nation that, according to him, was still at the stage of listening to fairy tales. His signature: "Soldier of the Homeland—Leka I." His motto: "Long live ethnic Albania!" [Rrnofte Shqipnia etnike—northern dialect in original] Many citizens recently rubbed their eyes when they saw arriving at various addresses "His Majesty's" tract with an attached photograph showing him frozen in a military uniform, with his late [merhum—Turkish in original] father in the background. Two large decorations adorn the royal breast. He holds a sword in his hand like a monarch of antiquity.

The phraseology of the "call" addressed by this individual to the Albanians, known to the world as an uncrowned king in the traffic of drugs and weapons and prostitution, smells of mothballs—so must his military jacket, because he has had little occasion to wear it. Anyone who reads this text might think that he has accidentally stumbled on a message in a bottle that has floated around the world, arriving at its destination after several centuries' delay.

There is no doubt that it was written recently, however, because the author takes it upon himself to make fun of the political pluralism recently established in Albania. He not only makes fun of it, but issues an outright call to "overthrow the regime," as he has done several times before. He invites the Army and the Sigurimi [secret police] to join in this. He promises complete amnesty for those who will take part in this armed uprising. Moreover, for the people, he promises the skies: Let them decide their future regime for themselves—a monarchy or a republic! What a pearl of an idea! Let us slaughter each other, and then let some kind of Prince Wied who does not speak Albanian [Wilhelm zu Wied, nominated to the throne of Albania by the European powers in 1914] come here to organize our journey to the polls....

Doubt has recently been expressed over whether there is any basis to the claims that internal or external enemies have had a hand in recent events. Are these not phrases borrowed from "cold war" rhetoric? One wonders who these "dark forces" are that are so often cited in various reports.

It is shortsighted to deny that forces or people abroad, and their underlings here, have a stake in our people's defeat. How well this would suit the tune of those who have never lost the hope of gobbling up parts of the territory of this state!

As for the dark forces, it is true that their instigators have still not been exposed. Let us not forget, however, that when Xhevdet Mustafa's bands of terrorists disembarked in Albania at the beginning of the last decade to commit the darkest deeds, it was Leka I who announced from his Johannesburg headquarters that those who failed in their mission had been sent by him. Now, we again hear anticonstitutional calls for a violent overthrow of the state, from the same source! All current political forces have dissociated themselves from such a

policy on principle. They are committed to political action that does not exceed the bounds of democracy.

The sole force to openly talk about bloodshed remains none other than the charlatan Leka Zogu. Of course, he is an illegitimate and illegal force, long ago declared to be so by the will of the entire Albanian people. Leka is no longer holed up in Johannesburg, however. He has recently come to Europe and is trying to clear away the cobwebs and to muddy the waters of our country. He has also sent such "sidekicks" of his as Y.S. and his friends, to make contact with Albanians who go to the West as visitors or refugees.

In fairy tales of kings and ghosts, there is also the bloodthirsty figure of Count Dracula, who slept the sleep of the dead by day, only to awake at night to go in search of victims. Leka Zogu, just like the vampire Dracula, is now rising from his vault in search of his prey.

Let him not be deceived, however: The Albanian people have decided once and for all to turn their eyes toward the future, and not to their bitter, medieval past.

French Official: Health Conditions 'Appalling'

AU1803193091 Paris AFP in English 1758 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Paris, March 18 (AFP)—Health conditions in Albania are "appalling" and the situation is worse than in any other Eastern European country, a senior French official said here Monday on returning from a week-long visit. Conditions in the region's last hardline communist state were "worse than in all the other countries of the east, including Romania", said Dr. Patrick Laburthe-Tolrat, who accompanied a delegation from Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action Bernard Kouchner's office to evaluate food and medical needs in Albania.

The situation in hospitals visited without advance warning was particularly horrifying, Dr. Laburthe-Tolrat, a surgeon, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. "It's the Middle Ages," he said. "They have no disposable syringes, no surgical gloves, no more insulin for the 5,000 diabetics in the country, no more penicillin or medicines in general."

"The maternity hospital in Durres, the second largest in Albania, doesn't have a single incubator or echograph," he added. "Viral hepatitis is rife in hospitals because of poor hygiene".

Albania urgently needed between 8 and 10 million francs (1.5 and 1.9 million dollars) to cover its health needs for the next six months, the official said.

France's State Secretariat for Humanitarian Action was studying ways of raising the funds with help from other ministries and non-governmental organizations. But the money would only be supplied on condition it was distributed by France in hospitals designated by a tripartite committee including representatives of the Albanian Health Ministry, Albanian Democratic Party and Human Rights Forum, he said.

It could not be sent before Albanian elections scheduled for March 31, he added.

Dr. Laburthe-Tolrat said he had met Albanian doctors who were "very competent, but very distressed" over the situation they faced. Many of them were trained in France, he added. On the positive side, the surgeon said he saw no hunger or food shortages and no queues in shops.

Italy's Andreotti Sends Message to Nano

AU1903143091 Tirana ATA in English 0928 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Tirana, March 19 (ATA)—On March 18, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, Fatos Nano, received at the seat of the prime minister's office the ambassador of the Italian Republic to the PSR [People's Socialist Republic] of Albania, Torquato Cardilli, on the latter's request. During the warm and friendly talk held on this occasion, the Italian ambassador expressed his satisfaction over the intensive activity of the Italian and Albanian officials which contributes to the strengthening of the bilateral relations. He aired the friendly feelings of the Italian Government and its head, Giulio Andreotti, for the Albanian Government.

The premier, Fatos Nano, voiced his satisfaction at the level of the comprehensive relations between the two countries, describing the current moment as a new chapter in the Albanian-Italian relations. He asked the ambassador to convey to the Italian authorities the will of the Albanian Government to go on with the summit meetings in Italy and Albania.

Torquato Cardilli handed over to the premier, Fatos Nano, a message by the Italian prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, whose content is as follows:

"Dear Premier, I greatly evaluated your letter of March 9, through which I realized that your government and the Albanian people cherish strong feelings of friendship for Italy. On my part, I wish first of all to thank you for the reception you extended in such moments to the vice premier, Claudio Martelli, who came to Albania to discuss in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation the delicate problem of the exodus of thousands of your citizens towards the Italian ports of the southern Adriatic.

I think, Mr. Premier, that the results of the meeting should be considered positive, because we were allowed to coordinate a valuable stand to create conditions so that the exodus be prevented and to create in these people a greater faith in the future. We welcomed with a great and sincere pleasure the guarantees to treat properly those who returned or will return in your country in the future, as well as for the release of all political prisoners. On the other hand, we appreciated the steps

initiated by President Ramiz Alia and the Albanian Government to lead your country towards genuine democracy and to conduct the next March 31 elections.

In this regard, Mr. Premier, we consider the invitation extended to Italy, other countries and European organisms to observe these elections as a significant gesture of Albania's opening. In fact election day is of fundamental importance not only in the process of democratization going on in your country, but also to instigate the cooperation of Albania with European institutions and to consolidate in essence our bilateral relations.

The Italian party is committed to give Albania every possible support on the road of democratic reforms and economic liberalism. These commitments were confirmed by Vice Chairman of the Council of Ministers Martelli, who also assured you for a near arrival of urgent aids which would contribute to overcome to some extent the difficulties your country is passing under these moments. As you already know well, Mr. Premier, agreement was reached on these matters and they were better defined during the meeting held between Minister de Michelis and Minister Kapllani in Rome on March 13. In this context, beginning with March 18, urgent needs will come to Tirana and they will be administered by the Italian-Albanian Joint Committee.

Finally, I consider as rather promising the consolidation of bilateral relations, the complete agreement on viewpoints, as it resulted from the meeting of our foreign ministers regarding the indispensable immediate discussion on the plans of long-term and mid-term aid.

Alongside these sentiments, please accept, Mr. Premier, my esteem consideration.

[signed] Giulio Andreotti, Rome, March 16, 1991.

Premier Nano Receives IMF Delegation

AU1903143191 Tirana ATA in English 0910 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Tirana, March 19 (ATA)—Fatos Nano, chairman of the Council of Ministers, received on March 18 afternoon, at the seat of the prime minister's office, the Labour Mission of the International Monetary Fund, headed by the chairman of this mission, Prof. Mario Blejer [name as received], that has come to our country to cooperate with the financial and bank organs as well as with the ministries and other economic organs for Albania's adherence to the IMF and other international financial organisms.

Premier Fatos Nano expressed to the members of the Labour Mission of International Monetary Fund his pleasure over the current meeting and thanked them for the work and efforts they have made during the stay in our country, to accelerate the process of Albania's admission to the IMF. Then he spoke on the recent developments in Albania and dwelt on the economic difficulties and efforts of the government to overcome them, to fully reform the economy, to head for the market economy. Fatos Nano said that Albania's integration in the international community means a powerful backing in the country's inner potential, but also aid on credits and investments. The request of the Albanian Government to adhere to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, he said, proves that Albania has entered and is marching concretely on the road of important changes to take part in all the processes of international community.

Prof. Mario Blejer, after thanking for the reception said that we have come to Albania as representatives of the International Monetary Fund to get really to know the current state of the Albanian economy, to fulfill together the desire of your government expressed last January to the IMF and World Bank that Albania adhere to these powerful international financial organisms. On behalf of my colleagues, he said, I thank the Albanian Government for the readiness it has displayed to make an expose of the development of the economy of your country as well as for the cooperation with your specialists and experts of various fields of economy, finances, bank, which have made a special contribution in this direction. Vast information we have accumulated will help us in drafting the report to be forwarded to the Council of IMF. Likewise, Prof. Blejer said that in the context of the reform for the transition onto the market economy, besides the financial aids Albania will profit due to its adherence to the IMF, during the period before reaching the respective agreements with this organism, it will also enjoy the necessary technical assistance in the financial bank field.

After greeting and thanking Prof. Blejer and the other members of the IMF mission, Premier Fatos Nano wished them successes in the work for accelerating the respective procedures related to Albania's adherence to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The reception, which passed in an friendly atmosphere of understanding, was also attended by Niko Gjyzari, general director of the Albanian State Bank, and Anastas Angjeli, deputy minister of finances.

Legislative Crisis Persists Despite Consultations

AU1903093391 Sofia BTA in English 2218 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—After a several days' pause parliament is sitting again. The consultations of the political forces with the president did not lead to a generally acceptable decision as to the future of parliament. The parliamentary opposition is divided over the problem whether to take part in the plenary sessions or not.

At the end of last week the "Ganev case" became the immediate cause for the differences between the political forces that had been fermenting for a long time to come to a head, which put at stake the future of parliament. After the Socialist majority tried to pass a resolution on the Credentials Committee's report that would cast suspicion on the legitimacy of Mr. Stoyan Ganev's election, the faction of the Union of Democratic Forces walked out of the hall and threatened a parliamentary crisis. More and more often different circles express the opinion that the present correlation of the political forces in parliament does not reflect the actual correlation in society, and that the Socialists' majority has been delaying the passage of key laws.

Last Sunday the rally of the joint opposition including the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) [SDS], the Bulgarian Agrarian Party and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, demanded new parliamentary elections. However, the UDF, which is the most influential political coalition at present, is not unanimous on the timing of elections.

After today's consultations, UDF leader Mr. Filip Dimitrov told a BTA reporter that the UDF Coordinating Council supports the schedule set down in the political agreement that was signed in January. According to the agreement the new parliamentary elections should be held in June at the latest.

According to a source who declined to be named, the Coordinating Council has taken a stand which was accepted by the parliamentary UDF group with reservations. At the consultations the UDF Coordinating Council suggested that no plenary sessions should be held for some time which would help overcome the parliamentary crisis. During this time the parliamentary committees should work on the new electoral law and other key acts such as the Constitution and the laws guaranteeing the implementation of the economic reform. The UDF Coordinating Council insists on giving guarantees that the Grand National Assembly will dissolve itself as scheduled and that the date for the new parliamentary elections will be set.

Today's parliamentary session was attended only by part of the M.P.'s of the UDF, the Agrarian Party and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms. The M.P.'s passed the currency values act and the statistics act.

After today's meeting of the Political Consultative Council the leader of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), Mr. Aleksandur Lilov, said that his party is for "expedite the local elections so that Bulgaria could have legitimate local administration," and for "holding the parliamentary elections as soon as possible." Mr. Lilov added that the government is perfectly justified in raising the question of creating the prerequisites for the reform, political stability included. He stressed that the BSP insists on peaceful, free and democratic elections and on inviting foreign observers.

Asked if the Credentials Committee's resolution will be put to the vote, the BSP leader said, "to me this is an isolated problem, it is not the major problem on which the situation in Bulgaria depends." And it depends on the preservation of civil peace, the country's peaceful transition to democracy, the adoption of the new Constitution, and the progress of the reform, he stated.

Dimitrov Will Negotiate To Unite Opposition

AU1803201191 Sofia BTA in English 1649 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—Mr. Filip Dimitrov, leader of the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) [SDS], is authorized to negotiate as of today the signing of a document on the unity of action of the whole Bulgarian parliamentary opposition, it was announced at the regular UDF briefing. But the talks are still in their initial phase.

This unity was clearly manifest at yesterday's great rally of the UDF, the Bulgarian Agrarian Party and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, according to the UDF leaders. The provinces also report spontaneous acts of unification. A document will formally endorse the unification.

According to the UDF leaders, yesterday's rally marked the beginning of the election campaign, though the local and the new parliamentary elections have not been timed yet.

Asked by a BTA reporter about the future relationships between the Bulgarian Agrarian Party (BZNS) and the Nikola Petkov Agrarian Party (which have made several unsuccessful attempts at a merger), the spokesman of the latter, Mr. Lyuben Bozhilov, said that his party supports the unification of the whole opposition. If both agrarian parties are on the opposition's common ticket in the forthcoming elections, the UDF will win them beyond any doubt. Mr. Bozhilov believes that now is the time for the BZNS to prove it is a real opposition party. According to him, the practical unification of the two unions is no longer of much importance.

Besides the BZNS and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms, the UDF will talk with the non-parliamentary forces. In the last few months, several non-parliamentary parties and organizations have been granted the status of

observers in the UDF. Separate parties and organizations affiliated to the UDF are also negotiating with the non-parliamentary forces. "The unification of the Bulgarian opposition is mainly targeted on the forthcoming elections, but it also meant to generate smaller political groupings within the UDF," said UDF spokesman Mr. Mikhail Nedelchev.

DPS Drafting Unity Document

AU1903212091 Sofia BTA in English 2041 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 19 (BTA)—Judging by the statements of leaders of the Bulgarian opposition, no serious talks were held on its uniting yesterday and today.

The big rally on Sunday was proclaimed the first rally of the united opposition. In many places this union is already a fact. It became clear yesterday that Mr. Filip Dimitrov, leader of the most influential opposition coalition—the Union of Democratic Forces, has been authorized to negotiate on the signing of a document on the unity of action of the entire opposition.

Probably the failure to hold serious talks on uniting the opposition is due to the legislative crisis and the negotiations on addenda to the agreement between the political forces.

Today a BTA reporter learnt that the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS) is drafting its own version of a document on uniting the opposition, it will be discussed with the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) and the Bulgarian Agrarian Party (BZNS) these days.

Judging by the statements of opposition MP's of the SDS, the BZNS and the DPS, this document will be based on the unity of action of the entire opposition in the local and the legislative elections.

Trade Union Leader Petkov on Political Crisis

AU1803162791 Sofia BTA in English 1531 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—"While solving the present parliamentary crisis, the political forces should mainly proceed from the attitude of the foreign countries to Bulgaria," Prof. Krustyu Petkov, leader of the Independent Trade Unions Confederation, said at a news conference held here today.

He reminded the stand taken by the confederation on the parliamentary crisis last November, which resulted from the opposition's demand for the resignation of Mr. Andrey Lukanov's cabinet. At that time the trade unions insisted that the Grand National Assembly should be dissolved and launched a subscription in support of this stand. Now the political situation has been aggravated by the arguments that flared up in connection with the legitimacy of an opposition M.P.'s credentials.

"At that time it was clear that the Grand National Assembly was blocked and it could not work. Now, four or five months later, we are facing the same problem: The Grand National Assembly has trapped the whole country and the reform. On the one hand, it obviously cannot, feed, laws to the reform, on the other hand, we are reluctant to give it up, several months would be lost," Prof. Krustyu Petkov said. [sentence as published]

He announced that some representatives of the political forces argued against the suggestion to dissolve parliament de jure and to give it two more months to pass the five most essential acts which are of key importance for the reform. The main argument put forward by them is that during the election campaign the debates on these bills will be shelved.

"At all events, the world's attitude to Bulgaria should be one of the basic criteria," Prof. Petkov stressed.

SDS Accused of Violating Political Agreement

AU1903180891 Sofia BTA in English 1716 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 19 (BTA)—The agreement between the political forces is being observed in the key points on which Bulgaria's transition to democracy depends, Socialist MP's said at their regular press briefing today. According to the BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party], the right wing of the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) was seeking an overall revision of the agreement. For their part, SDS leaders blame the Socialists for violating essential clauses of the deal.

Mr. Philip Bokov MP believes that parliament has been doing nothing these days because the SDS MP's refuse to work. Another top-ranking BSP official, Mr. Dimitur Yonchev, spoke in detail about what he sees as SDS violations of the agreement. He claimed that the Socialists were honoring their commitments concerning the BSP property, it was another matter whether the opposition liked the party's actions.

It was disclosed that the eleven companies run by the BSP have posted profits amounting to 18,634,000 leva. They have paid 7,129,000 leva in state taxes and not a lev to the party.

Mr. Yonchev sees a very dangerous tendency in Bulgarian politics in the ambitions to have the Grand National Assembly dissolved. "We must check the attempts of extraparliamentary forces to dictate their terms," he said.

The Socialists plan to be through with the document on the party's responsibility on Monday, March 25, and do not intend to launch their election campaign for the time being. They will soon be holding another congress, and the reformers believe that this time they will be able to influence the proceedings. Ms. Klara Marinova MP, spokesman for the BSP, said they failed to do so at the 39th BSP Congress.

Political Council Meets on Election Date

AU2003101091 Sofia BTA in English 0911 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 20 (BTA)—According to preliminary information, the Political Consultative Council is to make an amendment today to the agreement the political forces signed at the beginning of the year.

The principal issue is the date of the local and the legislative elections.

According to the latest information, the talks mentioned the end of June.

The slow legislative work of the legislature delayed the holding of the local elections scheduled to take place in March according to the political agreement. The legislative elections were scheduled for June.

As a whole the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) supports the idea for holding the legislative elections soon. The idea to hold these elections next autumn is supported mainly by representatives of the Green Party. Their chief argument is that earlier elections may impede the economic reform. This is also the argument presented by Deputy Prime Minister Dimitur Ludzhev (SDS) in favour of postponing the elections.

The SDS wants elections in June not only because it believes it will defeat the Socialist Party [BSP] then, one of the union's leaders said. Although this is exactly what the results of the polls are showing now. The more serious reason is that the situation will become even more complicated by next autumn: The economic reform will pose new problems before the Bulgarians, unemployment will grow and the first furtive steps of privatization will not be able to provide enough jobs.

Leaders of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS) have also repeatedly stated that the legislative elections should be held soon.

At its regular briefing, the Socialist legislative faction offered no clear and categorical statement on this issue. It is known that the BSP insists on holding the local elections before the legislative ones. Observers explain this by the Socialists' hope to take advantage of the local nomenklatura which is still in power and to keep their positions in some areas where the opposition is still weak. Moreover, the socialists announced that they will hold a congress or a national conference between the elections.

The meeting of the Political Consultative Council today will probably make it clear whether the Socialists have given in.

In connection with the mass rally of the united opposition on Sunday a BSP leader said it will be hard for the opposition to keep this pace. He also said that the Socialists will take the opposition's advice and will carry on their campaign not at rallies but from house to house.

Zhivkov Trial Continues; Key Witnesses Absent

AU1903172391 Sofia BTA in English 1653 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 19 (BTA)—The testimony of a key witness in the case of Todor Zhivkov and Milko Balev may be called into question at the trial which has been going on for 23 days here. Tinko Vodenicharov, who died at the end of last year, was housing aide of the ex No. 1. Vodenicharov was afflicted with severe atherosclerosis, as evidenced by his death certificate.

Prosecutor Krasimir Zhekov today submitted in evidence a copy of Vodenicharov's death certificate and thus prompted Zhivkov's defense to ask a post mortem medical examination of the witness's mental state during the investigation conducted last spring. The lawyers presume that diagnosed in that way, Vodenicharov could have hardly testified correctly about past events.

The prosecutor took objection to the defense request and reasoning but the court reserved judgment on the matter.

Tinko Vodenicharov is a key figure in the case targeting the privileges of the top communist party and state nomenklatura, corruption, deception involving documents and abuse of authority.

Defendant No.1 himself raised questions about Vodenicharov, some of which were answered at the hearing today. At the beginning of the trial Todor Zhivkov said he had personally removed that person from his office for gaining undue advantage by acting in Zhivkov's name. The defendant said he had tried repeatedly to reach the witness by telephone but was told that the latter was ill, then that he had suffered a "nervous breakdown" and finally that he was "dead."

"Who killed Tinko Vodenicharov?" Zhivkov asked at the start of the trial.

In all hearings so far, most of the witnesses called to testify in the trial have defaulted. Of the thirteen witnesses due to appear in the box today, eight failed to turn up.

Legislative Inquiry Committee on Personal Files

AU1903093691 Sofia BTA in English 2234 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—Socialist M.P. Georgi Tambuev, chairman of the Parliamentary Enquiry Committee working on the files of the M.P's, today expressed his disagreement with the clause that he said was included in the new political agreement according to which the files of the M.P.'s who were informers of the State Security should not be disclosed. He told journalists that as far as he had been familiarized with the new text of the agreement, the committee should complete its work by drafting a report and not by disclosing the informers' files.

In his opinion now that the names of the informers and the conditions under which they cooperated with the State Security are known, all of them, those with criminal records included, are afraid of being exposed.

According to the opposition's leader, Mr. Filip Dimitrov, the lists of informers should not be brought to light unaccompanied by the police files themselves as proofs.

The names of M.P.'s associated with the State Security can already be heard in the lobbies. These are mainly opposition M.P's which generates talk of political gimmicks once again.

Mr. Tambuev said that the setting up of the Parliamentary Enquiry Committee was primarily suggested by the Union of Democratic Forces. [SDS] He added that the UDF members of this committee have played a very important role in bringing the police files to the knowledge of the committee's leadership.

Garvalov Views Balkan Relations, Human Rights

AU1903095991 Sofia SVOBODEN NAROD in Bulgarian 8 Mar 91 p 8

[Interview with Human Rights Department Chief Ivan Garvalov by Elena Urumova; place and date not given: "Balkan Mine Fields"]

[Text] [Urumova] A delayed action bomb—the minorities' issue—again exploded in the Balkans. Two axes really emerged—the Sofia-Athens Axis, crossed by the Belgrade-Ankara Axis. Is this the end of good manners in the Balkan process and the return to the old tactics of bilateral pacts?

[Garvalov] Perhaps it is not absolutely precise to say that the minorities' issue in the Balkans is a delayed action bomb. This is not a new issue. It has exploded many times, and it does not represent a Balkan phenomenon. The issue exists in almost all European countries, let alone throughout the world. There is something that your readers and the Bulgarian public should know. As far as the international human rights institutions and instruments are concerned, there is still not a generally accepted formulation as to what the "minority" concept means. In the last 12 years the Human Rights Commission, which convenes annually in Geneva, has worked on a document called declaration on the rights of the so-called ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. This document is not ready yet. We must view this issue not in the framework of giving uniform characteristics to a practice that should be obligatory for all states, but rather as a part of the process of democratization. One must note how the issue is resolved under conditions of real democracy.

As far as bilateral relations are concerned, I think that relations between Bulgaria and Greece, as they develop, could serve as an example that our country should follow in constructing relations with each neighbor, providing that the other side agrees. We will never return to the old ways, but rather will march along the road of bilateral agreements and develop mutually advantageous Balkan cooperation within the framework of the all-Balkan process. Thus we will also create mutual guarantees for security, including in the military sphere.

[Urumova] Utilizing the situation that emerged, Yugoslavia very sharply criticized Bulgaria and Greece. There are signs of a similar attack on the part of Turkey. In what direction could the situation develop in the near future and what specific and immediate goals would Yugoslavia and Turkey seek?

[Garvalov] It is true that the positions expressed by the prime ministers of Greece and Bulgaria on some questions related to the so-called ethnic issue of the minorities evoked a negative reaction in certain circles in Ankara and Belgrade. For me such a reaction is an obvious stereotype of old thinking. I would not hesitate to say that this stereotype belongs to the era of the Komintern. We were accused of almost forming an anti-Yugoslav alliance and threatening the Republic of Macedonia. I think that such accusations are not only illogical but also absurd. The declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 27 February 1991 offers a categorical reply and clarifies the present official Bulgarian position on the issue of bilateral relations and all-Balkan cooperation. Perhaps we should recall again that when our country began its democratic development a rare case of consensus was precisely the consensus of the various political parties and forces in our country on the so-called Macedonian question. I think that in this respect Prime Minister Dimitur Popov assumed a principled position during his visit to Greece, namely, that in Bulgaria there are no ethnic minorities. Many European states have the same position. We and others know that no valid bilateral and international treaties signed by Bulgaria since its liberation state that there is a minority, let us say, a Turkish minority, in the country. There is no such treaty.

[Urumova] What will be the next steps in Bulgaria's Balkan policy? Will we continue to rely on strategic relations and relations between persons, or rather attempt to seek universal solutions of the Balkan problems within the framework of the European process?

[Garvalov] The Republic of Bulgaria has a new independent foreign policy, which gives priority to relations with its neighbors. Bulgaria expressed its willingness and readiness to actively work in the bilateral and multilateral sphere for achieving broad cooperation with all, without any exception, on the basis of mutual benefit and equality, noting both Bulgaria's national interests and the behavior of the partners. Naturally, we are prepared to march toward constructing a united Europe.

[Urumova] Until recently, and even now, Bulgaria was and is the target of criticism in the area of human rights. In the future, when we sign all international human

rights conventions, will we be able to criticize those who do not respect the rights of Bulgarians who live outside our borders?

[Garvalov] I feel it is important that the process of democratization in our country fully guarantees the implementation of all basic rights and freedoms of the individual person, as well as the rights and freedoms vested in the Human Rights Charter and other international documents. If we in Bulgaria agree in our transition toward democracy that the international human rights standards also fully apply to the Bulgarian people, then we will have no reason to doubt the fact that the same principles will apply in the same manner to other peoples and countries. It is well known that we have compatriots in neighboring and other countries, and I think that concern for them is natural. The Bulgarian people have a natural desire to know how their compatriots live and to maintain contact with them. This is a contact with kin, the motherland, and the nation. I think that the Grand National Assembly should decide that our country and the Bulgarian nation must maintain an active attitude toward Bulgarians who live abroad.

Human Rights Group Discusses Ethnic Issue

AU1803201091 Sofia BTA in English 1734 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—The Parliamentary Human Rights and Ethnic Issue Committee gave a news conference here today. The thirty-nine members of this body come right across the parliamentary political spectrum.

The question of whether there have been attempts at evolving a unified concept on the ethnic issue was discussed extensively and a variety of opinions were voiced. However, the general conclusion was that Bulgaria needs such a concept based on international legal norms. It was pointed out that the working out of the concept is beyond the Grand National Assembly's scope. The presidency and eminent Bulgarian scholars should take part in it.

In his capacity as member of the Bulgarian Helsinki Watch Group, M.P. Rumen Vodenicharov stressed that Bulgaria cannot afford now to solve the problem of collective human rights which is related to the ethnic issue. For the time being, collective rights can be limited, if need it be, to the interest of both civil and parliamentary peace.

Fatherland Party's Arnaudov on Turkish Issue

AU1903101991 Sofia VECHERNI NOVINI in Bulgarian 13 Mar 91 p 2

[Interview with Dimitur Arnaudov, National Assembly deputy representing the Fatherland Party of Labor, by Boryana Kostova; place and date not given: "The Nationality Issue Is Not a Piece of Clothing That Can Be Mended Forever"—first paragraph is VECHERNI NOVINI introduction]

[Excerpts] A few days ago the Fatherland Party of Labor issued a declaration in which it stated its intention of leaving the Grand National Assembly. We tried to learn some more details on the reasons for this decision by interviewing Mr. Arnaudov, the party's only representative in the government. His first sentence, however, was also somewhat puzzling:

[Arnaudov] I do not know much about the reasons for the decision, given that the leadership of the party that I am representing did not brief me on them. I learned about the decision and about the party's new stand from the media. From the press reports I also learned that the Fatherland Party of Labor has actually expressed its lack of confidence in the National Assembly and that it has decided that it cannot take its place in an institution that is not favorably viewed by our supporters.

[Kostova] As a matter of fact, this means that you should also withdraw from the Grand National Assembly. Do you intend to do so?

[Arnaudov] There is one detail—namely that I was elected in a single-mandate constituency. The arguments of the party's leadership in this respect seem rather strange to me, given that according to them I no longer represent the party, but only my own constituents. It is strange that the man who represents the party remains in the National Assembly while the party itself has left. This seems a rather devious explanation to me. Considering the lack of further information on the motivations of the Fatherland Party of Labor, I have nothing else to say. I do not intend to leave the National Assembly and I remain as an independent deputy. Let the public judge whether this is a logical action or not.

[Kostova] One of the reasons for which the Fatherland Party of Labor, as a political force, left the National Assembly is the decision about the introduction of optional Turkish language classes in Bulgarian schools. Is this reason justified in your view?

[Arnaudov] I do not approve this form of introducing Turkish language lessons. [passage omitted] All international treaties and UN documents dealing with human rights mention that only a state that has recognized the existence of an ethnic minority is obliged to integrate the language of this particular minority in its nationwide educational system. In this respect the strategy of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms [DPS] is quite transparent—namely the intention to impose the recognition of a Turkish minority in our country.

As far as the argument that the Turkish language should be studied in Bulgarian schools to prevent the establishment of Turkish schools in Bulgaria is concerned, it is irrelevant. According to the new Law on Secondary

Education, the establishment of private schools is authorized. No one can guarantee that no Turkish language schools will be opened. [passage omitted]

[Kostova] What are the major worries in this situation?

[Arnaudov] Some people may consider my misgivings as primitive, others may consider them irrelevant; however, I consider them rather important. I am convinced that the introduction of Turkish language lessons in state schools will provide favorable conditions for achieving the status of a Turkish minority in due time. My second concern is related to the danger of a future politicization of school children. [passage omitted] Last, but not least, I am rather worried about Turkey's long-term policy regarding the Turkish minority in our country. [passage omitted]

[Kostova] What do the majority of the Bulgarian people ignore about this problem?

[Arnaudov] I think that the people are totally uninformed about the issue. [passage omitted] The people do not suspect how dangerous it is to identify ethnic origin with religious affiliation. This is precisely what the DPS is doing. If you are a Muslim, then you are a Turk. I cannot believe this thesis, according to which Bulgarian Muslims are supposed to be Turks and their mother tongue is not Bulgarian.

[Kostova] Considering this conviction, how do you view the solution of the problem? What could restore calm and security in our country regarding national unity and the country's territorial integrity?

[Arnaudov] The new constitution would certainly contribute to the solution of ethnic problems. I think that the effort to solve the problem somewhat in advance, before knowing how individual human rights in Bulgaria will be settled in accordance with the country's international agreements, is likely to exacerbate tension. The comprehensive solution of the question through the new legislation that the Grand National Assembly is called upon to adopt is likely to calm down the situation. We need a total concept on the nationality problem, because by trying to mend the holes we are only further increasing the gaps in the people's unity.

Ruse Hunger Strike Begins Over Housing Problem

AU2003122991 Sofia Domestic Service in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Silvio Stefanov, Ivo Kharizanov, and Georgi Sreshtnikov report]

[Text] As of this morning 27 ethnic Turks, as they call themselves, started a relay hunger strike in front of the Ruse Municipal Council offices. Our correspondent Silvio Stefanov reports that their demands are primarily connected with the return of the dwellings, which according to them were forcibly seized during the events that occurred a year or two ago. The strike committee has prepared a list of 165 families whose dwellings were sold, pulled down, or rented out to other people. The strikers' demands are supported in a letter addressed to the Council of Ministers signed by the leaders of all the main political forces in the city which are represented in the legislature, as well as by others that have no legislative representatives.

Our correspondent Ivo Kharizanov reports from Turgovishte that this morning representatives of 70 families in the region began a relay hunger strike, demanding the return of the dwellings seized from them during the period of the so-called excursion to Turkey in 1989. In addition, the strikers demand that they are repaid the money they have paid out in rent on the free market in order to live until now. Last, but not least, they demand that the persons responsible for this should be criminally prosecuted and that the mass media should give full publicity to their crimes.

About 700 residents of Varna have signed a petition against the introduction of Turkish language classes in Bulgarian state schools and against the economic enslavement of Bulgaria's Black Sea territory by the so-called partnership market. Our correspondent Georgi Sreshtnikov reports that Bulgarian National Radical Party is organizing the collection of signatures for the petition in Independence Square.

In Burgas, the sit-in at the municipal council offices by members of the Seventy Club continues into its second day. The 110 young families, who have suffered losses arising from recently issued Council of Ministers Decree No. 36, demand that they are allowed to pay for the construction of their apartments, which was delayed for four years for reasons outside their control, at the old prices and interest rates.

Interior Minister on Crime Rate, New Legislation

AU1903181391 Sofia BTA in English 1752 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 19 (BTA)—Mr. Khristo Danov, minister of internal affairs, believes that the police should not wait for a new law to perform its functions adequately. "Even with the existing legal framework we can cope with any problem," he told the Legislative Committee which met today to discuss the causes for the dramatic increase in crime and the need for legislative amendments. In his words, even if the Grand National Assembly fails to enact a new police act, law and order at future elections can be maintained. Still, the minister would not commit himself to guarantees.

By the end of this week, a bill on structural and functional changes in the Interior Ministry will be submitted to the Council of Ministers. Mr. Danov believes that two more pieces of legislation must be urgently passed: an Intelligence Act and an Organized Crime Control Act. He said that an Organized Crime Control Directorate set

up with his ministry will cooperate with the police services of the advanced countries.

Testifying before the legislative committee, Mr. Martin Gunev, prosecutor general of the Republic, and General Leonid Katsamunski, chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, singled out the workload of the police officers and departments as one of the reasons for the rising incidence of crime and for the comparatively smaller proportion of solved cases. They believe that the competence of the operative police forces should be extended and the investigative and prosecuting authorities should be relieved of extrinsic functions.

Inflation, Cost of Living Increase in February

AU1803162991 Sofia BTA in English 1445 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—In February the cost of living went up 300 percent compared to December last year, is was announced at the meeting of the trilateral commission the government, the trade unions and the employers, held here today.

The commission decided to increase the amount of compensations granted after the liberalization of prices on February 1 as a result of which living standards worsened. The commission discussed the introduction of a mechanism for determining the "social minimum" on the basis of a "basket" of basic consumer goods.

The Union of Economic Managers, an organization of managers of the state-owned enterprises which control about 95 percent of the Bulgarian economy, went back on its decision to denounce the Trilateral Agreement on Social Peace During the Transition to a Market Economy. The agreement was signed by the participants in the trilateral commission in January this year.

At a national conference last week the union criticized the policy of the government, accusing it of "stifling the enterprises by introducing exorbitant interest rates." The union also declared that it would denounce the agreement on social peace a decision which was revoked today.

Mr. Dimitur Ludzhev, chairman of the trilateral commission and deputy prime minister, praised highly the work of the commission and told the BTA that the commission embodies the confidence that has been established between all the participants in Bulgaria's social and economic life.

Minister Pushkarov Views Economic Reform Progress

AU1603004291 Sofia Domestic Service in Bulgarian 1830 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Ivan Pushkarov, minister of industry, trade, and services, held a news conference today. He described his evaluation on the current progress of the economic reform and his views on its further development. After stressing his satisfaction at the manner in which the Bulgarian people accepted the reform, Pushkarov announced the most significant results that were achieved. In the first place he pointed out the drastic improvement in the attitude of the international public toward Bulgaria.

The minister described the following results on a domestic level as particularly important: The liberalization of prices and interest rates that was introduced and is already under way; the [words indistinct] and the already emerging trends of [word indistinct]; the additional amount of foodstuffs supplied for the markets, and the effective strike against black market.

The dollar-leva exchange rate issue was also mentioned. Pushkarov said we are gradually eliminating the trend of overrating the dollar and underrating the lev, the final goal being to reach a realistic exchange rate.

Pushkarov described the current financial stabilization as the first stage of the reform, while the second stage is expected to be the production sector reform, namely the gradual demonopolization and privatization. He indicated that overcoming the resistance of the monopolists, the settlement of the debts accumulated by enterprises and organizations in the sphere of industry and trade, and the passivity of certain managers related to decision-making are the most serious problems to resolve in the course of the reform.

BSP Remarks on New Soviet Friendship Treaty

AU1903212191 Sofia BTA in English 2016 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 19 (BTA)—A new treaty between Bulgaria and the USSR is a topical issue, Mr. Ivan Genov, deputy chairman of the legislative faction of the BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party], told the press today.

He made a special statement in connection with the expiring of the term of the now operative bilateral 1967 Treaty for Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in two years time. If Bulgaria does not wish to extend it, she must ask for its denunciation a year in advance.

Mr. Genov finds it alarming that "Bulgaria has no clear foreign political line as regards the USSR" and that "the bilateral relations are practically in stagnation." In his opinion, confrontative statements have been made at top level.

According to the deputy chairman of the Socialists' legislative group, until the establishment of the all-European system of security, the USSR will remain Bulgaria's only realistic ally.

Mr. Genov insisted on the establishment of a democratic national foreign policy, which would not change with the change of cabinets.

Council of Ministers' Instructions on Warsaw Pact

AU1803213591 Sofia BTA in English 1932 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—Today the Council of Ministers gave concrete directions as to the lines along which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defense Ministry should work in connection with the decision to dissolve the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

Asked by a BTA reporter about the financial claims that may be made on Bulgaria, Colonel General Yordan Mutafchiev, minister of defense, said that it is possible to find a mutually acceptable solution on a bilateral basis to all problems connected with the expenses shared by the Warsaw Treaty partners.

The government solved today the re-engaged servicemen's housing problem which caused tensions and even a sort of strike of Army officers in Stara Zagora (eastern Bulgaria) in late February. The Defense Ministry will sell to officers and NCO's [non-commissioned officers] 20,000 flats from its quota at prices equal to those existing before the of prices at the beginning of February.

Problems With Vietnamese Workers Reported

AU2003122691 Sofia BTA in English 1054 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 20 (BTA)—The clash between Vietnamese citizens of the hostels in Sofia's "Krasna Polyana" residential district and the Sofia security forces ended in bloodshed on both sides. This tragic incident can be compared to the bursting of a long matured furuncle which could have been painlessly operated on several years ago.

Why did things go this far and who is to blame? If we continue to merely exchange accusations the relations between Bulgaria and Vietnam may eventually be disrupted.

In 1978 Vietnam was admitted to the CMEA [CEMA] and by 1980 it had already signed treaties for friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance with Bulgaria, the GDR, the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Within the framework of these treaties there were signed bilateral agreements for cooperation in the sphere of labour resources.

The problem was that these agreements had nothing to do with the international labour law standards and no sound economic basis. The Bulgaro-Vietnamese agreement was remarkable for its excessive liberalism and legal inconsistency. There were so many omissions and ambiguities in it that it became a time-bomb....

According to Todor Zhivkov, "in 1980 Bulgaria was a flourishing island in the ocean of the world crisis," while "the heroic people of Vietnam" was poor and hungry. Bulgarians welcomed the Vietnamese workers without knowing anything about their way of life, culture, manners and customs. In this respect however, Bulgaria and Vietnam are two different worlds. The newly arrived Vietnamese started work after one-month language and training courses. They were not acquainted with Bulgaria's legislation and with the social standards in Bulgaria.

The first conflicts between Bulgarian and Vietnamese workers were more funny than serious. There were brawls because of improper use of words and gestures. A Vietnamese worker set a stadium on fire not because he wanted to, but because he did not know the Bulgarian words for "Fire" and "Help." The Bulgarian police and the customs officials were "ordered" to leave the Vietnamese workers alone. They could buy anything in any quantity and send it to their numerous relatives. Bulgaria became the promised land for the Vietnamese workers and they paid large bribes at home to be sent to Bulgaria.

Most Vietnamese got hard and underpaid jobs due to their lack of qualification. Subjected to double exploitation, they started seeking other ways to make some money. Many of them worked over-time, "privately," or changed their jobs for better paid ones, but that was no solution to their problems. So they started to trade illegally in hard currency and goods in short supply and entered procuring and prostitution. If at the beginning this was the occupation of separate individuals and later of separate groups, in the last two years the whole Vietnamese community decided to turn their useless leva into goods that could be of some value in Vietnam.

While in the beginning the intercepted offenders pleaded that they did not know the Bulgarian laws and language, now they accuse the Bulgarian law enforcement authorities of violating Bulgarian and the international laws. At first there were fights, now the community is preparing for war "to defend itself from the surrounding aggressive society...."

Things became extremely complicated in 1989 with the economic, political and social crisis in Bulgaria. The attitude to the Vietnamese workers deteriorated. The police and the customs authorities started strictly sanctioning offenders. The Vietnamese demanded that the rights they had enjoyed for nine years be protected but it turned out that these were not settled in the bilateral agreement. It had all been "a gesture of good will" on the part of the Bulgarian side. A decision had to be urgently taken by both countries. But the Vietnamese Government left the matter to be decided by the Bulgarian Government which constantly changed and never managed to consider this pressing issue.

Let's hope that the shots of March 17 have reached the ears and the souls of those who must handle the matter, otherwise the number of the victims of the meaningless hatred and hostility will grow.

Early Repatriation Sought

AU1903084791 Sofia BTA in English 2208 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—Today the Council of Ministers discussed the proposal of the Sofia City Council to send the Vietnamese working in Bulgaria back home as soon as possible.

The passage back of the Vietnamese workers should be organized by the Ministry of Defence. For this purpose the City Council suggested to the Ministry of Defence that the Balkan Airlines should provide free of charge two aircraft to fly the Vietnamese home. The transport fares should be covered by the national budget.

The government approved the idea of the city council. In its report to the government the city council points out that the social tension in Sofia has risen following the offences against the law committed by the Vietnamese citizens. A large part of the Vietnamese are no longer at work and have no other income but the profits made from black marketeering and other illegal activities.

The city council has come to an agreement with its Vietnamese partners on the termination of the Vietnamese workers' employment contracts, Mr. Aleksandur Karakachanov, mayor of Sofia, told the press. He said that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Transport have been entrusted with organizing the transportation of the Vietnamese workers as soon as possible.

Visit to Austria, Nigeria Yields Dollars, Oil

AU1903092991 Sofia BTA in English 2212 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Sofia, March 18 (BTA)—The five-day visit by Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandur Tomov to Austria and Nigeria yielded two important results: Austrian investment and Nigerian crude oil. Austrian businessmen are ready to invest in Bulgaria mainly in the petrochemical industry after the respective legal guarantees are set down. Some 30 young Bulgarian experts will be trained in Austria on the problems of privatization. Through the European Investment Bank 40-50 million dollars will be allocated for the transition of the Kozloduy N-plant to a "special" regime. These are part of the agreements reached by Mr. Aleksandur Tomov during his visit to Austria.

He was there at the invitation of the UN Vice Secretary General, Mr. Gerald Hinteregger, and took part in the meeting of deputy prime ministers and ministers from Eastern Europe and Latin America on problems of the transition to a market economy. Mr. Tomov also met Austrian state and economic officials who expressed their opinion that Bulgaria's coalition government was the only means to win Europe's confidence. It was also stressed that the place of Bulgaria is in Europe.

In Nigeria Mr. Tomov negotiated the signing of an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation and on investment guarantees, as well as on the transfer of Nigerian investment to Bulgaria and to Bulgarian banks. Besides the two sides agreed on the terms and conditions for the import of Nigerian crude oil and for processing Nigerian crude oil at the Burgas-based refineries.

Humanitarian Aid From Israel Arrives

AU1903171991 Sofia BTA in English 1628 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Jerusalem, March 19 (BTA)—The first cargo aircraft carrying aid for Bulgaria, collected by Bulgarian Jews in Israel, will take off from the Ben Gurion Airport tonight.

In about ten days another aircraft carrying about 15 tonnes of cargo will take off for Bulgaria. According to the preliminary information of the Israeli Association for Friendship With Bulgaria the sum collected to date exceeds 100,000 U.S. dollars. The charity campaign is going on.

All people taking part in collecting humanitarian aid for Bulgaria say that it is just a gesture of solidarity with the Bulgarians who are now in trouble, and, above all, an expression of gratitude to the only people that succeeded in saving its Jewish compatriots from the Nazi concentration camps. Not only Bulgarian Jews but also state institutions such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are taking part in this modest gesture, local sources assert. This shows how unnatural for the two peoples was the hostile attitude to Israel under the previous regime in Bulgaria. Ideological considerations blocked bilateral relations for 23 years.

Calfa on Slovak Situation, Meciar Remarks

LD1903210991 Prague Federal 1 Television Network in Slovak 1830 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Address by CSFR Prime Minister Marian Calfa; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Esteemed friends: Many things have taken place in Slovakia in the last few days. Last week we witnessed two huge rallies. In the first rally, for the first time slogans appeared that have not been known in Slovakia since World War II—these were slogans about anti-Semitism. We could even describe some slogans as fascist. In the second rally, an attempt was made to attack the president of the Republic and to insult him. I am very alarmed at all these things, especially since they took place only in one Slovak city—Bratislava. This makes one wonder why it happened precisely there and why it happened when it did.

Last night I listened with great interest to the news conference of Slovak Prime Minister Meciar. I must say that it evoked very mixed feelings in me, feelings that are somewhat similar to those caused by recent events in Slovakia, especially in Bratislava, as I mentioned. Yesterday, for the first time, Prime Minister Meciar defined his attitude to the political party, or the political movement, which nominated him to the post of prime minister. I must say that I do not understand the prime minister's refusal of accountability to his own movement, which nominated him to this post. Not so long ago, on 7 December, Prime Minister Meciar voiced the opinion that my work in the post of federal prime minister should be evaluated by the Slovak Council of Public Against Violence [VPN] and that it should also assess whether I am carrying out VPN policy through my work. Thus Prime Minister Meciar himself recognized that a politician nominated to a post by a movement should be accountable to that movement. The very same people are in the VPN leadership and the methods of work employed by the VPN leadership are the same. Indeed, its own democratically created assembly is to its credit. What, then, is at issue? Why is it that there exists such a difference between the standpoint of several months ago and now? I can see only one difference in this issue. It rests in the fact that what is being discussed now is the work of Prime Minister Meciar himself, his work in the post of prime minister, the work of a man who is a VPN politician nominated by the VPN to this post.

Second, during his trip back from the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Meciar said that the situation in Slovakia is being dramatized and that it is simply not as complex as it seems. Yesterday at the news conference I learned that it is possible that strikes or rallies may be organized in support of this politician. Prime Minister Meciar rejected this option, of course. The fact remains, however, that a politician who has even considered it and who speaks about it on television as if it were a realistic option must be aware of what he is saying. Nowadays, Czechoslovakia is a country in real motion. It has had free elections and, as a result, it has democratically elected structures. I personally feel that all political matters should take place within the framework of democratically elected structures.

There is yet another matter I would like to mention. Today we are working very hard indeed on the (?implementation) of economic reform. The last thing we want is to jeopardize the efforts of our working people, because each strike will inflict real consequences on them. Thus, linking these matters with one's own political position is, in my view, a matter of utmost irresponsibility.

Finally, here is the third point. At yesterday's news conference Prime Minister Meciar once again voiced several conclusions from which it ensues that federal bodies are working against certain Slovak bodies and against Meciar himself. I should say that, and this has been happening with Prime Minister Meciar very often of late, he is portraying the federation as a bogey, as a structure that must be overcome and done away with. We are now working on the new structure of our state. We want it to be a federation and Prime Minister Meciar claims explicit allegiance to it. How then can I explain to myself that we should jointly build a state formation referred to as a federation with this politician who in some respects successfully creates an impression that the federation is a bogey? This appears unrealizable to me.

Dienstbier Warns Against Country's Breakup

AU1903124591 Prague CTK in English 1622 GMT 17 Mar 91

[Text] Prague March 17 (CTK)— Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier has warned that the division of Czechoslovakia into two independent states would produce instability and be disadvantageous economically for both parts.

Referring to international response to the current political situation in Czechoslovakia, following fresh calls for Slovakia's independence, Dienstbier told the citizens of the West Bohemian industrial city of Plzen on Saturday night [16 March] that foreign politicians were openly opposed to any division in the current era of integration. He said a possible division of the country into two independent parts would be disadvantageous to both but with graver consequences for Slovakia whose economic structure is not as diversified as in the Czech Republic.

As regards the possibility of a referendum, Dienstbier considered it indispensable to formulate questions so that the adopted arrangement could never be questioned.

* Dubcek Against Referendum in Slovakia

91CH0430A Rome IL MESSAGGERO in Italian 12 Mar 91 p 4

[Interview with Federal Assembly Chairman Alexander Dubcek by Roberto Livi in Bratislava; date not given: "Dubcek: This Is How Prague Is Slowly Returning to Europe"]

[Text] Bratislava—When he talks about Italy his eyes shine and his face breaks into a smile. "They often ask me if I have friends in your country. I answer that it seems to me I have many, very many of them among the ordinary people, the ones who were able to support me, especially during difficult times for me." That is how Alexander Dubcek speaks about Italy in his study in the palace of the Slovak National Council, where he receives us. Tomorrow he will be in Rome, a guest of Nilde Iotti, in his capacity as president of the federal National Assembly. "It will be an opportunity to renew an already close friendship between our two countries," he stated.

At 69, after two decades under special surveillance by the secret police of the communist regime, Dubcek has come back to play a political role of first importance.

[Livi] What is your appraisal of the Czechoslovak experience after 15 months of the "velvet revolution?"

[Dubcek] First, the positive facts: the reconquest of national sovereignty after 20 years of a totalitarian regime under Soviet surveillance, the advanced transition toward a democratic and pluralistic system, the return of the federal Czech and Slovak Republic—as our country is now called—to Europe. I am filled with pride that the transition to democratic legality has come about without violence. That fact testifies to the high culture of our people. Personally, I am also proud of the effectiveness of our legislative effort. In a little more than one year we have succeeded in providing ourselves with legislation enabling us to be admitted into the Council of Europe in full status. What leaves a bitter taste in my mouth? The emergence of extremist tendencies, often nationalist and chauvinistic, during this transitional phase. We found it is easier to destroy the old than to build the new.

[Livi] Nationalist fever has increased in recent weeks here in Bratislava, where a referendum on independence is demanded, in practice, on splitting up the federation. Do you support the demand for such a referendum?

[Dubcek] I do not think it is the time for such a referendum. Not when we have begun the path for obtaining entry into the European Community. Naturally, I am favorable to full development of Slovak identity, as also for the existing minorities (Hungarian, Ukrainian, Moravian, etc.) in Czechoslovakia. But I think the objective of a national Slovak Republic can be reached through the constitutional process which is under way, and which within the year should reach drafting the basic charter of the Czech Republic, of the Slovak one, and of the federation. Above all, the nationalist flame is a legacy from the past of authoritarian regimes that did not allow full expression of national rights. I consider that the will of the two peoples, the Czech and the Slovak, and of the minorities, is to live in one common federated state.

[Livi] Nationalism is now spreading from the Baltic to the Balkans, and in an acute form in Yugoslavia, just at the borders of Slovakia. According to you, why has this somewhat 19th century demand for a nation-state emerged from the bankruptcy of socialism?

[Dubcek] It is something one must wonder about. Above all, I should like to state that what has been defined as socialism in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, was not, in reality, socialism. It was a dictatorship of a political model, Stalinism, exported from the Soviet Union to other countries that had begun the road to socialism after World War II. With the failure, even the defeat, of that system of totalitarian domination, a civil society is reemerging in the various countries of Central Europe. And among these movements there also are some that look more to the past than to the future.

[Livi] The explosion of nationalism places Gorbachev's perestroyka in crisis. Do you think the Soviet leader can resist the wave of conservative forces?

[Dubcek] Gorbachev certainly is in an extremely difficult situation. For him the most complicated problem is indeed that of nationalities. That is the first problem Gorbachev should have faced when he rose to the Soviet top in 1985. The Czechoslovak experience should be illustrative: During the "Prague Spring" in 1968 we had set the priority objective of reforming the federal constitution along with the political and economic reforms. For that reason, the country's minorities supported the reform movement, and Brezhnev did not succeed in finding a fifth column in Czechoslavia. He had to resort to the force of tanks to end the "Prague Spring." Hence, perestroyka is not the cause of the Soviet Union's difficulties, as the orthodox and a few generals maintain. Rather, it is the legacy of the past weighing on the country. If the process of democratization is ended, there will be extremely grave consequences which all of us hope will not take place.

Pithart Does Not Expect Meciar's Dismissal

LD1903143191 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 1130 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart is on a one-day visit to Tabor today. At the opening of talks with chairmen of district councils of South Bohemia, he spoke about the situation in Slovakia. It is his expectation that the Presidium of the Slovak National Council will not propose the dismissal of Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar. On the contrary, the situation within the Slovak Government has come to a head in such a way that some people cannot work together under any circumstances. We must expect, Petr Pithart said, that Mr. Meciar will continue to be my first

partner. We must be prepared to talk with him even the hour after this state breaks up, the possibility of which cannot be excluded, Petr Pithart said.

Pithart on Reservations About Referendum

AU1903150991 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 14 Mar 91 pp 1,2

["jd"-signed report: "Prime Minister Pithart After the Government Session: Let Us Not Be the Clowns of the World"]

[Excerpts] At a news conference held yesterday, Prime Minister Petr Pithart first presented to journalists a statement [on the situation in Slovakia] adopted by the Czech Government. [passage omitted]

Replying to journalists' questions, Petr Pithart said that if we want to look like clowns in the eyes of the world, we can conclude a state treaty between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Such a treaty is nonsense, especially from the legal point of view, because first this state would have to break up into two.

If people vote in the referendum on the preservation of the federation, there will be a positive reply even from those whose ideas of the federation are completely different and who want a federation with divided economies, which is not feasible at this time of transformations. A question that would concern the preservation of the federation would therefore be dishonest. The only meaningful thing would perhaps be a plebiscite in Slovakia, in which its inhabitants would be asked whether they wish to have an independent state.

Asked what economic consequences the country's division would have, Petr Pithart did not give a direct reply but only observed that the Czech Republic would not be badly off. He also mentioned that a group of experts is operating under the Czech Government, studying the practical repercussions of this "extreme solution." [passage omitted]

Pithart Interviewed on Slovak Problems

LD1903221991 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 1800 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Interview with Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] The past week has demonstrated that the burning issue of federation versus Slovakia still exists. It has turned out to be a very disconcerting affair.

[Pithart] We will have to get used to it, one way or another. The problem of Slovakia will continue to be topical, just like other problems. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Well, you must admit that the Slovak problem emerged in a very disconcerting form last week.

[Pithart] The Slovak problem did not simply emerge. It has existed for a long time, in fact since the beginning of our state's existence. If it has reemerged, it is only in our opinion, for us, the Czechs, particularly for Prague citizens; but it did not emerge last week, but a year ago at the time of parliamentary [word indistinct] war. Since then it has attracted attention. We notice it at times, at other times we do not because we are innundated by other problems. [passage omitted] The agitation itself is not the problem, but rather how the problem surprises every one of us and how we are taken aback by it. This should not happen.

[Reporter] From this point of view, how do you judge what happened to the president in Bratislava in the Slovak National Uprising Square on Thursday?

[Pithart] I would say that what happened is very telling, it points to something. A crowd that reacts like this to the presence of the president of the Republic mainly tells us a lot about itself. I saw here, above all, a confrontation between two attitudes. The president represents the attitude that is, in fact, willingness to learn; it is a cooperative approach. The crowd, which allowed itself to be put into a certain mood by Deputy Panis, adopted a rejecting attitude and its behavior was awkward. However, the crowd did not represent all Slovakia. When viewed from Prague, the Slovak scene often becomes blurred. This should not happen. For example, the Monday meeting of Matica in Bratislava played a somewhat different tune from the separatist one on Thursday. [passage indistinct] I think that by Monday some Thursday moods were already being heard in Bratislava. Above all, let us not forget that what appears to us here to be a crisis of the federation is, above all, an internal Slovak crisis; it is inside the Slovak political representation. That is the problem that the Slovak public alone does not know how to deal with. It has a significant background that I would call Slovakia on the threshold of economic transformation. We talked about this as little as a week ago. The fact is that issues in politics are just the same as elsewhere. A problem that is difficult to grasp, which may be more significant, can be replaced by a different one that is easier to grasp from an emotional viewpoint. It is simply easier to blame economic difficulties on coexistence with the Czechs. I even believe that the president's visit to the separatist meeting can only improve things. It can help clarify differences between various Slovak political viewpoints, to explain them to the Czechs and the Slovak public, maybe, above all, to the Slovak public.

[Reporter] The president, after all, represents the entire federation. Let us then return to Czech politics. In his last television address, Prime Minister Meciar criticized the Czech side, he criticized the unrest during the past week of the Czech political scene and, above all, Czech lack of understanding for what is happening in Slovakia.

He even documented it by the Czech or, possibly, Prague lack of understanding for what is happening in Moravia.

[Pithart] Look here, politicians all over the world are inclined in crisis situations to pass the buck to the other side. This is a general weakness of politicians, but not only of politicians. That is why I do not hold it too much against my Slovak colleague. There is some truth in what he said on television. Understanding Moravian troubles in Prague is a task that we have not completed yet, but the opposite is true as well. Remember how badly the policy of the Czech National Council was and is being understood as to the issue of the state arrangement of the Czech Republic. The Czech-Moravian moods inside the Czech Republic can help us to understand the Czech-Slovak discords inside the federation. I am referring to an aid to understanding. I am not identifying Moravian and Slovak themes. The Czechs and the Moravians, after all, are a kind of a double act, as expressed poetically and tellingly by Mr. Trefulka from Brno. The Czechs and the Slovaks are simply two peoples. What is being called a disintegration of the political scene in Bohemia might instead be called the transformation of the political scene. The scene is not static, there is constant movement of viewpoints and [words indistinct] who hold them. If the scene is to change, the present setup must disintegrate so a new one can be created. This is normal. It is up to us to understand this.

[Reporter] Even if what is involved is lack of understanding or misunderstanding, there might come a time when this cannot be overcome and then a decision must be made. Then there is no alternative but for the public to decide, for example, by means of a referendum, which is much discussed nowadays.

[Pithart] As to using a referendum to solve our Czechoslovak problems, I cannot hide my scepticism. This is what the three political representations stand for: the Slovak, the Czech, the federal. A referendum is for decisionmaking of the yes and no type. But we are facing a different problem, the problem of how, and a referendum will not provide any answers to this, particularly if so much misunderstanding is involved. A referendum must be preceded by thorough enlightenment; that is, knowledge. Every adult must understand the question he has to answer in the referendum and must have time to consider the reasons why he is answering the way he is. I am afraid that the current situation is not favorably inclined to something like this. That is why political figures should not be passing the buck to the public.

[Reporter] Mr. Prime Minister, how would you compare your, let us say, laid back attitude to setting up the operative commission for a variant solution of the state arrangement? All citizens understood this to be a measure in case the federation falls apart.

[Pithart] Yes, they understand it correctly. Let us, however, remember that the general staffs, even at times of profound peace, [words indistinct] simulate wars which nobody wants. They simply want to be ready. The Czech Governent does not yearn for the disintegration of the federation; quite the reverse. It must also be ready for all eventualities. Otherwise, citizens of the Czech Republic would be right to point out that it is not preparing for what many feel to be a threat. That is why it wants to be ready. But I continue to hope that this commander-state setup will stop at the planning stage and will not take place. [Reporter] Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for your interview.

Civic Movement on Slovak Situation, Policy Aims

AU1903124791 Prague CTK in English 1730 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Prague March 15 (CTK)— Czech Civic Movement (OH) official Pavel Rychetsky called here today on "all Czechs and Slovaks not to respond to the escalation of nationalism, chauvinism, and emotions by doing the same."

He said that common responsibility for the state is of primary importance and binding. "We are convinced that the situation in Slovakia is a certain price we pay for freedom but at the same time we think it has the same roots as the situation in Bohemia," Rychetsky said at a press conference of the Civic Movement, one part of the former Civic Forum.

He referred to Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel's incident in the Slovak capital of Bratislava yesterday, saying that street demonstrations are one of the attributes of functioning democracy. But if they go beyond the limits of the penal law, it is necessary to apply legal order resolutely, Rychetsky said.

He stated that the disintegration of the Czechoslovak federation would be an irrevocable step whose consequences would influence lives of all citizens in the country. "The sovereignty of a nation means the right to free decision about its statehood. This decision, however, must be taken in a lawful and constitutional way," he stressed.

Referring to Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar's statement that it is not good if the Czechs oppose the conclusion of a state treaty in advance, another Civic Movement official Petr Pithart said that "either we are a law-observing state and respect the Constitution or we want the whole world to laugh at us for concluding a state treaty which cannot be concluded."

Czechoslovak Deputy Premier Pavel Rychetsky told journalists that no amendments to the blueprint for the economic reform are expected at tomorrow's extraordinary session of the Czechoslovak Federal Government at Kolodeje, east of Prague, which will be attended also by President Havel.

A program statement of the Civic Movement, with which newsmen were acquainted, said that the movement wants to pursue a political center platform. It backs the quick economic reform and aims at building a

market economy which respects social and ecological aspects. It condemns all attempts aimed at slowing down the economic reform.

The 1968 events in Czechoslovakia clearly proved that socialism based on Marxist ideology cannot be reformed and all attempts to reform it resulted in a blind alley, the document said. However, accusations of those who in 1968 wanted to overthrow the totalitarian regime and free Czechoslovakia from the dictate of the Soviet Union are regarded by the Civic Movement as unjust and inadmissible.

The movement says that representatives of the Communist regime who have committed criminal offenses must be brought to court for trial. Those who bear political responsibility must be put on moral trial. The Civic Movement, however, does not want to unleash a new round of endless purges.

The movement strives for a federal setup of Czechoslovakia based on federal economics, legislation, foreign policies, and defense. It wants to preserve the federation in harmony with the will of citizens expressed, if necessary, in the form of a referendum.

The journalists were told that a constituent congress of the Civic Movement will take place in the second half of April 1991. Civic Forum Coordinating Center head Libor Prudky said that about 40 deputies of the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly support the movement.

Carnogursky Comments on Slovak Government Session

LD1903144591

[Editorial Report] Bratislava Domestic Service in Slovak at 1100 GMT on 19 March carries a seven-minute live report by Sona Jesenska and Magda Pospisilova from the Slovak Government session in Bratislava.

Jesenska, turning to the absence of Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar from today's government session, notes that her guest at the microphone is Slovak Deputy Prime Minister Jan Carnogursky. She asks him: "In the present complex situation, people will no doubt ask why Prime Minister Meciar is not here and why you are chairing today's session?"

Carnogursky says: "The reason is very simple. Prime Minister Meciar telephoned me this morning saying that he is going to the hospital for a medical examination. He asked me to chair today's government session. This is why Prime Minister Meciar is not attending the government session."

Jesenska asks: "Does he have any serious medical problems?" Carnogursky replies: "I do not know if they are serious, but since he has gone in for a medical examination, then he must have some medical problems. I repeat: There is no need to dramatize this, there is nothing political behind this."

Jesenska notes: "We have been told that television viewers will not see Prime Minister Meciar on Sunday in his regular talk. The government decided on this today. Can you explain this? What is the reason?"

Carnogursky explains that it is Prime Minister Meciar who last July "suggested that not only he should take part in the regular weekly broadcasts, but that other government members should also take part. This proposal was forgotten, but now the government has retuned to this idea on the basis of proposals from yesterday's session of the coalition parties. The government has decided that all government members will have a turn on the regular weekly television broadcasts. It has also decided that deputy prime ministers will be first. The first of the deputy prime ministers will speak next Sunday. It will be me."

"We have been getting many telephone calls since yesterday in which listeners have been questioning the fact that Foreign Trade Minister Baksay assured his partners during talks in Luxembourg that the situation in Slovakia will calm down in a few days because, according to information available to him, the Slovak prime minister will be replaced," Sona Jesenska tells Carnogursky.

Carnogursky laughs and says that this statement only reflects the fact that Minister Baksay has been in the government for a short time and lacks experience. He adds: "I do not have any such information. Yesterday, individual parts of the coalition outlined what their moves would be today at the session of the Slovak National Council Presidium. It emerges from their statements that Prime Minister Meciar in fact cannot be recalled from the post of prime minister at present. It has only been decided to set up a Slovak National Council commission to investigate how he has been carrying out his duties. The commission will likely work for some time, even a long time. We cannot speculate now what report the commission will give the Slovak National Council. Thus, I think that Minister Baksay is not qualified to make such a statement," Carnogursky concludes.

He is then asked about economic issues the government discussed today. The government dealt with draft proposals on the increase in the price of fuel and heating and compensation for the increase in housing costs. "It approved the first alternative from the stand of the federal government: It has approved increases in the prices of fuel and energy for consumers. This will be the case from May," Carnogursky says, but does not give any actual figures. As people do not heat their homes in the summer, the actual increase will be felt in September, he notes.

"The government has also approved a bill on the Matica Slovenska. Mr. Markus was attending the session. How satisfied is he with the formulation of the bill?" one of the interviewers asks Carnogursky.

The government has reached complete agreement on the form of this bill. Mr. Markus, who is chairman of Matica

Slovenska, expressed his agreement with the draft bill. This bill on Matica Slovenska brings Matica into harmony with the bill on assemblies of citizens. There is also a need to harmonize the double role of Matica: the fact that on one hand this is a mass organization with local branches and, on the other hand, a certain institution that fulfulls some functions defined by the state." He concludes the interview by saying that "despite the fact that it could seem to the public that the political situation in Slovakia is rather stormy, this has not been reflected at all at today's session of the government. The session is businesslike." He adds: "I think that the government is able to continue its work."

Fendrych: No Security Services Following Meciar

LD1903185891 Prague CTK in English 1729 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Prague March 19 (CTK)—No federal security service has been following Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar, press spokesman of the Federal Interior Ministry Martin Fendrych said in response to Meciar's yesterday's statements.

The Slovak premier repeatedly accused the federal Interior Ministry of following him and collecting materials against him.

Meciar has the whole police of the Slovak Republic at his disposal, including the secret service which is able to expose within a week anybody following him, said Fendrych.

He added that if Meciar thinks he is being followed by federal security members, he should contact directly the federal interior minister. But not a single proof confirming Meciar's statements has been provided by now.

Rally of 2,000 in Bratislava Supports Meciar

LD1903211491 Bratislava Domestic Service in Slovak 1730 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Alena Michalicova report]

[Text] Around 2,000 people came to the Slovak National Uprising Square in Bratislava this afternoon to express their support for Vladimir Meciar, who, according to the words of the moderator, is the only one who has proved that he can lead Slovakia to prosperity and to a democratic society. The meeting was organized by an independent group around the (Adres) publishing house and VOICE OF SLOVAKIA weekly.

With the words, let us be a guarantee that nobody will steal Slovakia from the Slovak people and nobody will belittle the Slovak nation and its country, the moderator appealed at the very beginning of the meeting to the Slovak Interior Ministry and to the police corps. He said that Prime Minister Meciar has received great support in the form of petitions from large Slovak enterprises such as Slovnaft, Chemical enterprises of Juraj Dimitrov, Orava Foundry, East Slovak Ironworks in Kosice, and so on. A number of petitions supporting Vladimir Meciar also contained the idea of a general strike.

At the end of the meeting its participants adopted a resolution in which they demanded, I quote:

First, that the Slovak National Council Presidium dissolve the current legislative body and proclaim new elections.

Second, that in cooperation with the Interior Ministry an investigation commission be set up to investigate criminal deeds in connection with the Tatragate affair.

Third, that criminal activity in connection with the Slovak National Gallery be investigated.

Fourth, that the unlawful activity by the group from the Jiraskova Street be investigated or that this commission assess to what extent it is a political activity and to what extent it is a criminal activity.

End quote.

Around 1700 hours, approximately half of the participants in the meeting which passed peacefully went to the spot in front of the Slovak National Council building where they expressed their support for Prime Minister Meciar by chanting.

Miklosko Condemns Attack on President Havel

AU1903124991 Prague CTK in English 0139 GMT 16 Mar 91

[Text] Bratislava March 15 (CTK)— President Havel's walk near the square where the demonstration was held was no provocation. The Republic's president has the right to come to any place of the Republic any time, Chairman of the Slovak National Council (parliament) Frantisek Miklosko said on Czechoslovak television tonight.

Dealing with yesterday's demonstration in Bratislava to mark the 52nd anniversary of the Slovak state (1939-45) during which a group of people tried to attack the Czechoslovak president, Miklosko said that this attack exceeded the limits not only of decency but also of lawfulness, adding that the Bratislava General Prosecution started this morning investigation of the incident.

Slovak Deputy Charged With Propagation of Fascism

AU1903125391 Prague CTK in English 1352 GMT 15 Mar 91

[Text] Prague March 15 (CTK)— Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (parliament) Deputy Jan Mlynarik today asked the general prosecutor to institute criminal proceedings against Deputy Stanislav Panis for propagation of fascism.

The move of Mlynarik (Public Against Violence) was motivated by yesterday's statement of Stanislav Panis

(Slovak National Party) that the declaration of the Slovak state (a Nazi Germany satellite ed.) in 1939 was one of the greatest and most glorious events in the history of the Slovak nation. Panis was speaking at a demonstration convened by the "Slovak National Unity" organization on the occasion of the 52nd anniversary of the declaration of the Slovak state, which was marked by calls for Slovakia's separation.

In his letter addressed to the prosecutor general, Mlynarik said the establishment of "the Slovak State was tantamount to the negation of the principles of a democratic parliamentary state, installation of totalitarian power which unleashed a genocide of Jews, persecution and murders of Slovak patriots who resisted Nazism."

Miklosko Dismisses Czech Fears of Fascism

AU1903145091 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 14 Mar 91 p 1

[Interview with Slovak National Council Chairman Frantisek Miklosko by Ivo Slavik; place and date not given: "Only by Constitutional Means"]

[Text] [Slavik] We have the feeling that Jozef Markus, chairman of the Slovak National Heritage Foundation, interpreted the outcome of your meeting on Monday [11 March] somewhat differently than you did in your statement on television.

[Miklosko] There never was any talk about an agreement [between Markus and me]. We explained our positions to each other. He told me that even the Slovak National Heritage Foundation does not completely agree with the draft of the declaration [of Slovak sovereignty]. As chairman of the Slovak National Council, I cannot take any steps that are not constitutional.

[Slavik] The question being asked in Bohemia in connection with the referendum is not only whether there should be a federation, but also what kind of a Slovakia there will be—a social-fascist Slovakia or a democratic one?

[Miklosko] The term national socialism, which is discredited from the time of World War II, is being inaccurately applied here. Both parts of the term are embodied in the person of Vladimir Meciar. He is beginning to act nationally and, as far as his attitude to the radical economic reform is concerned, he has come very close to a leftist social program. This has given rise to the term national socialism, which, as personified by the prime minister, certainly does not have any fascist features. Another matter is that his tendencies could be described as authoritarian. Fears of something resembling fascism in Slovakia are groundless, however. In this context I would like to warn [Presidential Spokesman] Mr. Zantovsky to speak with caution because his statements [made on 11 March about the revival of national socialism in Slovakia] have provoked irritation. Besides, what he said is not true. When someone cries out something against Gypsies, it still does not amount to fascism.

[Slavik] Federal Assembly Deputy Chairman Milan Sutovec mentioned in an interview for MLADA FRONTA DNES that the idea of Slovak statehood has actually been implemented.

[Miklosko] The idea of Slovak statehood is a touchy issue that cannot be explained in one sentence. The Czechs do not carry inside them the problem of unfulfilled Czech statehood. An ordinary Czech tends to identify more with the federation and does not have any bitter feelings [for the federation] inside him. This issue must be approached sensitively. I have discussed it several times with President Havel and he realizes that it is a serious existential problem for the Slovak nation. A fair solution is necessary, otherwise the situation could explode at any moment.

[Slavik] What about the possibility of a tripartite federation?

[Miklosko] I am afraid that the very idea of a tripartite federation [composed of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia] would cause apprehension in Slovakia. Slovakia has a certain process of state formation behind it and reservations about Moravia [acquiring the same status] could therefore arise. I do not believe that this situation could be resolved by preventing the majority from imposing its will on the minority. This is not a political problem but an existential one.

[Slavik] It seems that such apprehensions are backed by emotions rather than by common sense.

[Miklosko] Definitely. But I would tend to see the reasons on the existential level rather than on the emotional level. These are feelings that could not be made visible while Slovakia, just as the Czech lands, lived under totalitarianism. Yet these feelings are deeply ingrained.

[Slavik] There problem of minorities in Slovakia also exists. If Slovakia became independent, a movement for Hungarian autonomy would emerge.

[Miklosko] Of course. Many people do not consider this possibility, but it is absolutely evident. Everyone is filled with his own feelings, feelings that are ultimately legitimate. Man does not look around himself at such moments and forgets the international implications.

Slovak Party Leaders Give Views on Federation

AU1903122691 Bratislava VEREJNOST in Slovak 14 Mar 91 pp 1,2

["(mig,aj,iy)"-signed report: "At the Crossroads of Our History"]

[Text] Even an absolute layman in politics knows and understands today that the exciting days and moments

we are experiencing are very serious. Many people say that everything is at stake. No matter how we look at the matter, we can see that all of us are involved. The Slovak nation—or more precisely, all inhabitants of the small piece of land under the Tatra mountains—and our fellow citizens in the Czech Republic have reached, each and everyone, historical crossroads. Will it be a parting with previous coexistence or a birth of a new quality? We are bringing here the views of those who bear a giant burden of political responsibility for our future.

Frantisek Miklosko, Slovak National Council chairman:

Truly speaking, I am not surprised by how things have begun moving. I expected that in connection with the creation of the new constitutions, the principal problem that existed somewhere under the surface for a long time would emerge. It is the problem of the fundamental arrangement of this country. Slovakia has been living with unsatisfied aspirations for its statehood for centuries. Slovakia has been here for 11 centuries, of this, ten centuries under Budapest's rule and, in the 20th century, in the shadow of Prague. We have been a province so far, but at this moment Slovakia has matured as a modern European nation. This nation feels the fact that its own statehood remains unfulfilled as something that is troubling our Slovak organism. It would be a mistake if we wanted to suppress in some forcible manner this feeling and the voices that represent it. At the same time, however, the question arises of how to find a solution that would give positive results. I am in favor of a peaceful solution by means of consensus that would correspond to our needs, but also to the European trend. There is a certain difference, however, in that Slovakia is in a position different from other European countries and the nationalities living in them that cede a part of their sovereignty to a higher integrating whole. That is to say, these nations have already found a fulfillment of their own statehood. Slovakia is supposed to do this without being satisfied in this regard and, moreover, it feels somehow threatened in entering Europe only under Czechoslovakia's name. That is to say, in political and constitutional terms, Slovakia would perish from the face of the earth. Those are substantiated fears that must be solved in one manner or another. This solution must correspond to national consensus and, at the same time, to the consensus in the entire country. This is why it cannot be a radical and an aggressive solution. It has to be a matter of mutual consent. The movement has begun, yet it is difficult to predict its consequences today. This is why I am fully backing the legitimacy of the entire process. Should all the opportunities to conclude an agreement in a parliamentary democratic way fail, then there is only one last legitimate form—a nationwide referendum, the will of the people.

Fedor Gal, chairman of the Public Against Violence movement Slovak Council:

I am convinced that this national—but to a great extent also nationalistic—upheaval in Slovakia will subside only after a nationwide referendum. It will show the will of Slovaks, Czechs, and all other nations living on our territory. I am deeply convinced that a referendum will show not only their willingness to live together as two equal partners, but also the vital need for human, national, and civic coexistence in the context of meaningful existence, work, and humanity. Giving preference to appealing nationalistic attitudes destroys all those values I mentioned as they came to my mind. I would also like to stress that we have never made a secret of the inevitability of changing the way people perceive things by respecting the sequence: citizen-community-national republics. We do not want to give up the federation as such, however, because in this case we would have to give up something from inside of us, we would also negate the historical continuity of Slovaks and Czechs, and we would give up our own hopes for the future.

Jan Petrik, Christian Democratic Movement central secretary:

An independent Slovak state—definitely not. Yet, we are not in favor of a federal republic according to the president's concept either. Recently, the Christian Democratic Movement representatives have presented a number of times their proposal for the arrangement of the federation. It is based on building the federation from below, but not as the president thinks that a federation is built from below with citizens electing their deputies to legislative bodies who then proceed to establish a federation. Our concept of a "federation built from below" is that national representative bodies—parliament and also the government—establish a federation in such a manner that the representatives of the nation voluntarily join the federation on the basis of a legal agreement; not on the basis of a political declaration. We do not insist on the term confederation. Yet the essence of a confederation-type arrangement is actually realized here. I believe that all possibilities have not been exhausted yet to make it necessary to hold a referendum on the constitutional arrangement of the state. A referendum is a good thing, but in a state that is really democratic.

Jan Holcik, Democratic Party chairman:

The Democratic Party's attitude is unequivocal and publicly known. We strive to preserve the common state with the Czech Republic. We want to create it from below with the national republics having political and economic priority. We are members of the coalition to really put the Slovak Republic Government program into practice.

In the interest of calming the agitated political situation surrounding the drafting of constitutions of the republics and the common state, we suggest that the procedure of adopting the constitutions be laid down in a constitutional law so constitutionality is guaranteed and subject to some control. It is not important what our final constitutional solution of the common state is called in legal terminology. What is decisive, however, is that the will of our nations be enacted.

At the moment, we consider the breakup of the common state to be the most inappropriate solution to the current situation, since the price for such a solution in terms of politico-economic, international, and domestic political consequences would be too high for the Slovak nation.

'Corrective Steps' to Economic Strategy Urged

AU1903184091 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 15 Mar 91 p 3

[Interview with Slovak Economic Strategy Minister Rudolf Filkus by Marta Moricova; place and date not given: "The Scenario Is Not Dogma"]

[Excerpts] The economic situation in Slovakia requires a swift solution. This is why a meeting of economists has been called for 22 March. The objectives of this meeting have been briefly explained to us by Rudolf Filkus, Slovak minister for economic strategy.

[Filkus] It is exceedingly important to hear diverse views on the course of economic reform. It would, of course, be ideal if the proposed steps were in line with the radical economic reform. I do not rule out, however, that alternatives to the economic scenario [approved by the Federal Government and the Federal Assembly] will be presented as well, but I repeat that it would be ideal if we could speak about various alternative steps and procedures on the platform of the radical economic reform. [passage omitted] We are even open to views and materials that come from sources other than the coalition parties. Why has this situation come about? Well, it has become apparent that the steps taken previously have produced different results than we had expected. We have set ourselves the task of macroeconomic stabilization through a restrictive policy and of eliminating the budget deficit within the framework of this policy. At the beginning of the year we found out that the state budget in Slovakia continues to show a deficit, a deficit that has come about not because we have exceeded planned expenditures (we have actually reduced them) but because our revenues are lower. We said that we would not revive the economy and the result is that the supply side has brought the flow of revenues to a halt. The basic problem that we must tackle now is therefore that of reviving the economy to fill [naplnit] the supply side. The crucial question is how to do it. The clear answer is through privatization and foreign capital. But we must do it through economic centers as well. By this I mean not only the government but also banks and other financial centers. The scenario of the economic reform is not dogma. We have already said that every step taken thus far needs to be analyzed and that any subsequent step can be taken only on the basis of this analysis. In other words, what is involved is not a departure from the radical economic reform but a correction of steps taken within its framework.

National Assembly Approves Arms Agreements

LD1903224391 Prague CTK in English 2152 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Prague March 19 (CTK)—Both the Paris pact on conventional armed forces in Europe and the Budapest agreement on maximum levels of conventional weapons and technology in the former Warsaw Pact countries were approved today by the Czechoslovak parliament.

Speaking in favour of the pact on conventional armed forces signed in Paris on November 19, 1990 Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier said it would contribute to a substantial reduction in the concentration of conventional forces in Europe, assuming its implementation in strict accord with the letter and spirit of the document.

Czechoslovak forces will be reduced under the pact to agreed-on limits, meaning that 1,880 tanks, 2,453 armoured combat vehicles, 2,335 pieces of artillery and 101 fighter planes will be scrapped - or exported - within 40 months of the pact's ratification. As of February 4 the Czechoslovak Army possessed 3,315 tanks, 4,503 combat vehicles, 3,485 artillery systems, 446 fighter planes and 56 attack helicopters. Assorted accessory technology will also be cut back under the Paris pact.

Also approved by the Czechoslovak parliament today was the Budapest agreement, initialled by the six member-states of the Warsaw Pact—Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union—in Budapest on November 3, 1990, and establishing ceilings on conventional weapons according to an agreement reached with NATO.

The liquidation of surplus weapons and technology will cost the Czechoslovak state some 250 million crowns [korunas], according to Jan Fricar (KDH), rapporteur from the house of the people. Just to destroy a single tank will cost 50,000 crowns.

Minister Dienstbier noted that before the pact took effect the Soviet Union managed to shift a large part of its forces from the western front to the east, beyond the Ural mountains, thus excluding them from the agreement. The Soviets justified the move with the claim that they did not have the technical capacity to liquidate such a large quantity of forces in such a short time.

Another problem mentioned by the minister was that the USSR technically reclassified three ground divisions as coastal defence, then saying that naval forces were not covered under the provisions of the pact. This demonstrates the attempts of the USSR General Staff to save what it can, said Dienstbier.

The Czechoslovak Government insists on doing everything possible for the implementation of the pact, which it considers an important instrument for the reduction of conventional forces in Europe—particularly in the Soviet Union, whose forces are not to exceed one-third of the total military potential of the other signatories combined.

In the debate on the pact, deputy Libor Kostya of the Communist Party told parliament that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and several other Middle Eastern countries are interested in obtaining weapons from Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak foreign minister responded that all current agreements on weapons shipments are provisional, and the issue is now whether Czechoslovakia will export any heavy weapons at all.

Dienstbier further noted that the war in the Persian Gulf cost Czechoslovakia some 2,000 million dollars in lost revenues, aid, and so on. He proposed that a special parliamentary committee be formed to deal with arms trade issues in detail.

In other business today, the parliament approved unanimously a government bill to accede to the protocol on the amendments to the 1961 conventions on narcotic substances and the covenant against illegal trade in narcotics and psychotropic substances, negotiated in Vienna in December 1988.

1990 Report on Economic Development

AU1803095591 Prague HOSPODARSKE NOVINY in Czech 12 Mar 91 p 4

["Federal Statistical Office Report on the CSFR Economic and Social Development in 1990"]

[Text] The past year, 1990—the first fiscal period following the fundamental social and economic changes in Czechoslovakia—was also a period of preparations for the decisive stages of economic reform. In this context, some significant systemic changes were launched in the sphere of economic policies, as well as in the material sphere (in the structure of the economy's sectors and ownership; in the price structure; in the financial, currency, and credit areas; in the gradual liberalization of foreign trade; etc.).

The complexity and the newness of the problems arising from an economic maneuver never before effected—the transfer from central planning to a market economy—greatly influenced the behavior of all economic entities and consequently also the economic results. As time progressed, the factor of "expectation" of future changes, particularly of price increases and devaluation, has been ever more apparent in the conduct of both the consumers and the manufacturers.

Significant changes in external conditions had a considerable influence on the development of the Czechoslovak economy last year. CEMA gradually disintegrated and the USSR's economic decline intensified. On a global scale, international tension diminished and—against original expectations—the process of German reunification was accelerated; on the other hand, during the second half of the year, a grave regional focal point of tension erupted in the Persian Gulf.

The impact these events had on the Czechoslovak economy has become evident mostly in problems with securing the raw material inputs (there was a cutback of approximately 20 percent in crude oil supplies and between 10 and 40 percent in non-ferrous metals supplies as compared with the quantities needed) and with marketing the consumer goods (the necessity to convert the armament industry, low solvency, and the unreliability of partners from CEMA).

The intensity of the negative impact of the external conditions was augmented to some degree by the internal shortcomings of our economy. Among the long-term ones are the industry's high demand for energy and raw materials caused by the "heavy" orientation and technical backwardness, artificial over-employment, price deformations, and, last but not least, a formidable inflexibility of response, by the enterprise as well as the administrative spheres, to any changes—be they in the internal or in the external environment. The unilateral orientation of economic cooperation with the USSR and CEMA countries became a great burden, as did the persistent shortage of goods capable of competing on the exacting markets. During the complex period of transition from centrally planned management to market relations, the aforementioned chronic problems were appended by insecurities in the development prospects of individual enterprises and sectors, a decline in work discipline and in motivation of the management staff as well as signs of incipient social tension.

Beside the negative effect, one cannot overlook the reciprocal effect. There is a reduction in defense expenses (to the amount of approximately 3 billion korunas), for instance, a moderately positive development in foreign trade, the first changes in the structure of the sectors and ownership in capital investment and in industrial production, and finally some results of the reformative efforts are already discernible, particularly in the development of private entrepreneurship.

Inflation and unemployment in particular added to the longer-term fundamental tendencies, firmly rooted in the upsurge in economic imbalance and in the gradual decline in the dynamism of the main branches of production.

The Discrepancy Between the Creation and the Utilization of Resources

The most significant manifestation of economic imbalance was recorded in the discrepancy between the declining pace of production and the increasing utilization of material resources. According to preliminary estimates, the volume of the gross social product—in comparison with 1989—fell by 3.2 percent and the national product (net) fell by 3.1 percent. Utilization of the national product, however, increased by approximately 1.4 percent and exceeded the gross domestic product by 24 billion korunas [kcs], that is, by 4.3 percent. The accumulation fund increased by roughly 3 percent. The volume of unsold goods increased sharply,

the volume of implemented investment projects rose slightly, and the growth in fixed assets declined. Nonmanufacturing consumption, as well as personal consumption, increased by 1.1 percent.

Among the fundamental causes of the extremely unfavorable relationship between the creation and utilization of material resources belongs the transformation of financial funds into material ones as a result of the growing fears of inflation. In the enterprise sphere, the effect was manifested by an increase of stock. The adopted restrictive measures to reduce investment activities proved to be insufficient

Also in 1990, capital investment remained a significant cause of imbalance and of inflationary tendencies in the economy. In addition, the intended actions to reduce its size could not be effected.

The overall volume of investment projects and supplies (excluding private construction, services provided by small enterprises, and small cooperatives) rose by 5.7 percent in comparison with the previous year; the volume of construction projects declined by 4.6 percent, and the volume of machinery and equipment increased by 17.1 percent. This influenced favorably the material structure of investments.

The investment projects and supplies for environmental protection increased substantially (by 59.4 percent) only to reach a mere kcs8.8 billion—i.e., 4.6 percent of the total volume of investments.

The developments in unfinished construction continued to be unfavorable and this was manifested in extremely long-lasting constructions and in a constantly growing amount of assets frozen in unfinished construction, the volume of which increased by kcs25.3 billion, i.e. by 14.6 percent.

The increased utilization of material resources as well as the overall economic results were influenced by a drawing on reserves and also by foreign resources.

The Debit in Foreign Trade

Our commercial balance (with the price quoted as "all charges paid") in foreign trade went into the red both in relation to states with a market economy (kcs17 billion; in 1989 it was in the black by kcs0.9 billion) and to CEMA countries and other socialist oriented countries (kcs12.9 billion).

According to the Czechoslovak State Bank preliminary figures, the banking currency position in relation to the states with a market economy declined by $1.3 billion in comparison with 1989. The decline was caused above all by exceptionally high drawing on short-term credits, which were reduced by $1.1 billion.

The CSFR's gross foreign debt at the end of the year amounted, according to preliminary figures, to $8.1 billion. It increased by $200 million during the course of 1990.

Foreign trade turnover declined by 7.6 percent overall in comparison with 1989. It increased by 3.3 percent with states with a market economy (even after the devaluation of the Czechoslovak koruna).

The structure of the representation of individual territories on the total turnover also changed. The share of CEMA and other socialist-oriented countries declined in favor of countries with a market economy.

The development of trade with CEMA and other socialist countries varied according to the country in question. The greatest export reduction occurred in the case of the former GDR. The volume of exported production declined here by 53.4 percent. The volume of exports to the USSR declined by 11.4 percent and to Poland by 21.4 percent.

Imports of goods and raw materials from this territory also declined, mostly as a result of the reduced imports of raw materials from the USSR. The decrease was, above all, a consequence of the decline in the import of Soviet crude oil, where only approximately 13 million tonnes were delivered instead of the 16.6 million tonnes promised in the contract. Imports from the former GDR and from Poland also declined.

The price development in this region was quite favorable and brought about an improvement of real trade to the effect of kcs1.9 billion. Expressed in physical terms, the volume of goods in comparison with 1989 declined by approximately 21 percent for exports and by roughly 14 percent for imports.

In our exchange of goods with states with a market economy, we were unsuccessful—despite the repeated devaluation of the Czechoslovak currency intended to stimulate exports and restrict imports—in completely fulfilling our aims. Imports rose by 9.7 percent, while the volume of goods exported fell by 3.1 percent. Of the imports, those from Austria and from the FRG grew the fastest. With respect to this region, the real trade relationship improved only marginally (by kcs0.56 billion). In concrete terms, the volume of imported goods increased by 10.8 percent while the exports declined by 2.5 percent.

The involvement of foreign capital in the Czechoslovak economy increased in 1990. The number of enterprises with foreign capital participation already exceeded 2,000, and in three-quarters of these enterprises the capital participation by a foreign partner exceeded a 50-percent share in the fixed assets.

More Money, Worth Less

In the domestic economy, the discrepancy between the utilization and the creation of resources led to an imbalance in the consumer market. Gradually, particularly in the second half of the year, the population, fearing an inflationary spiral, has endeavored to realize its savings in the market. It was manifested in the accelerating

dynamics of retail turnover during the individual quarters of 1990. The first-quarter retail turnover in current prices increased in comparison with 1989 by 7.1 percent, the increase in the fourth quarter was already 21.2 percent. The rapid growth of retail turnover was influenced above all by the increase in consumer prices, and to a lesser degree by greater purchases by the population (the physical volume of retail turnover increased only marginally—by 1.3 percent). Affected by the problems of satisfying high demand from the population, from the second quarter, the stock of goods on the domestic market began to diminish.

The population's personal earnings—and especially expenditure—increased sharply. Earnings increased by 8.7 percent (by 5.3 percent in the first quarter, compared with the same period of the previous year, and by 13.5 percent in the fourth quarter); expenditure increased by 12.3 percent (by 7.3 percent in the first quarter and by 24.2 percent in the fourth quarter). The high dynamics of the population's personal earnings were influenced above all by the increase of salary income, social income, by payments of the state compensatory allowance (after the elimination of the negative sales tax on food), increase in the allowance for individual home construction, and by the increase in the loans provided; however, real income of the population declined by 1.1 percent.

The fastest growing item in the expenditures was the purchase of convertible currency by the population (it more than doubled in comparison with 1989). The level of savings declined markedly (it was 3.7 percent in 1988, 3.5 percent in 1989, and only 0.3 percent in 1990). The level of savings declined gradually over the year, and on the average it was lower than in 1989, even if we include deposits in the Tuzex [network of shops using payment coupons obtainable only for convertible currency] and convertible-currency accounts, and saving bonds. It was for the first time since 1953 that there was a decline in the total amount of savings.

The development in the savings of the population and organizations projected negatively on the creation of sources of credit. While credits provided to the private sector reached the figure of kcs3.4 billion, this still represents only 0.6 percent of credits provided to enterprises. The insolvency of organizations as demonstrated by overdue payments to financial institutions increased as the second half of the year progressed and, at the end of 1990, it reached kcs53.5 billion. The greatest danger of high insolvency are problems with financing that prevent even the good enterprises from acting in accordance with a market economy and augmenting their production.

Completely new phenomena associated with the development of market relations entered our economy last year.

The number of private entrepreneurs rose sharply. Whereas 224,100 were registered by 30 June, three months later this number was 339,100 and by the end of the year it was 488,400. The focal point for private enterprise is still the services sector, but this sector's contribution to the economy's overall results is not significant, among other things, also because it was not as yet included in the privatization of the state property (its share in the creation of the national products is estimated at more than one percent).

Prices and Cost of Living

Inflation and unemployment belong to other phenomena formerly known in our conditions only as mediated.

The movement in prices accelerated despite attempts to control inflationary tendencies by a restrictive policy during the course of the year. The increase in wholesale prices amounted to 4.5 percent; however, in the fourth quarter it amounted to 16.6 percent (on account of the increase in energy costs at the end of the year). Whereas during the first half of the year—in comparison with the same period of the previous year—consumer prices rose by only 3.7 percent, they rose by 14.1 percent in the third quarter and by 18.4 percent in the fourth quarter (these prices rose by 10 percent for the whole year). The highest increase in food prices were for milk and milk products, fats, baked goods, sugar, and potatoes. Fuel and oil, newspapers, and journals were the most affected consumer goods. In the services sector, railroad and bus transport became more expensive and so did construction work. Economic policy measures, including the repeated devaluations of the currency, had the greatest effect on the price increase. The impact of the changes in the product mix and of the implementation of contract prices was moderate (as is indicated by the temporal distribution of the price changes over the year). The currency devaluation was only partially projected in the level of prices. It has affected the price movement completely only since the beginning of the year.

The increase in the level of consumer prices is reflected in the rise in the cost of living. This was more apparent for families with a lower income and a larger number of children. In comparison with 1989, the cost of living index for blue- and white-collar workers' households increased by 9.9 percent, for cooperative farmers' households by 10 percent, and for pensioners by 10.2 percent. Detailing this, in the fourth quarter, the cost of living for laborers and white-collar workers increased by 18.9 percent, for cooperative farmers and for pensioners by 18.7 percent (each of the two groups), while for the laborers' households and for the white-collar workers with three children, the increase was 20.0 percent.

Labor Market Situation

The situation in the incipient labor market gradually changed. At the end of the year, the number of people employed in the state and cooperative sectors declined in comparison with 1989 by 400,000 individuals. The decline in employment was influenced by the phasing down of some types of production, by a reduction of the apparatuses of social organizations, and also by the

development of private business (during the year, the number of private entrepreneurs—having their business as their main occupation—increased by 90,000 persons, and a number of additional workers were employed by the private businessmen).

A portion of the total decrease in the number of employed persons reflects the cutting down on additional part-time employment in the context of the progress of private enterprise. The number of registered job seekers at the end of the year reached 77,000 persons, i.e. 1 percent of the total work force.

Of the total number of unplaced job seekers at the end of the year, almost 65 percent collected unemployment benefits—the total sum paid in such benefits over the year is kcs266.9 million.

A substantial part of the job seekers in 1990 were placed through the Labor Office.

The average gross nominal monthly salary of employees in the state and cooperative sectors in comparison with last year increased by 3.8 percent to kcs3,380, the average net income (after tax deductions) was kcs2,755. As a consequence of the steep increase in the cost of living, real income in 1990 declined by 5.6 percent in comparison with 1989 (in the last quarter the decline reached 10.6 percent). The population has been partially compensated for the increase in the cost of living by a state compensatory allowance paid to every citizen of the CSFR since July. If this allowance is considered, the annual decline in real wages comes to 3.1 percent, and 6.5 percent of it was realized in the last quarter.

Social Policy

Concurrently with the economic-reform program, the CSFR Government also prepared a social program, in which it specified the new goals of social strategy that include the competition mechanism, i.e., an adjustment in the wage and social income to the cost of living. Already during 1990, some measures were taken that were reflected particularly in the size of the pensions and family allowances. In effect as of 1 October 1990, a new minimum pension was set for recipients with no other means of income—kcs1,200 [per month] for singles and kcs2,000 for couples. At the same time, the pensions were classified according to the time of their awarding and increased by 4 to 10 percent respectively.

The average sum of newly awarded old-age pensions was kcs2,000—i.e. it increased by kcs45 in comparison with 1989. The average sum of the paid old-age pensions was kcs1,640, or approximately kcs120 more than in 1989. The newly implemented measures are more than 80 percent responsible for this increase in the old-age pensions.

The introduction of the parental allowance that is provided for the care of a child under three years of age in the amount of 900 korunas monthly greatly contributed to the ability to deal with the social situation. Young parents with small children are the ones who benefit the most from this allowance. This allowance does not prevent a limited gainful activity. According to a survey, approximately 320,000 persons collect the parental allowance.

In 1990, if all types of housing construction are considered, 69,400 housing units were completed, i.e., 19,200 units less than last year. The annual expectation was 66.1 percent fulfilled. The decline was particularly striking in the housing construction by construction enterprises, which was connected in part with the reevaluation of the realization of some selected structures in the housing construction and in part with the decline in the number of employees in civil engineering. In the area of individual housing construction, 27,500 units were completed, i.e., 800 units more than last year.

The problems with shopping and services in new housing complexes continued, and the modernization and maintenance of the housing was not satisfactory either. A total of 3,520 apartments were modernized, i.e., 559 apartments less than last year.

In 1990, new housing construction starts in the form of single-family houses increased significantly—52,700 of them were started during the year, i.e., 105.8 percent more than the average of the 1980s. The implementation of the edict 74/89 by the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Czechoslovak State Bank on assistance to individual and cooperative housing construction greatly contributed to this development although its effect was temporarily withdrawn in October. The grant to the individual constructors reached kcs7.3 billion in 1990, while a year earlier it was only kcs2.3 billion.

Education and Health Care

In the education sector, the adopted amendments to legal regulations made it possible to found private and church schools, to study in the ninth grade of the elementary school, form new types of studies at high schools, new forms and lengths of courses at the technical institutes, colleges, universities, etc.

In the 1990-91 school year, 166,000 students enrolled in the regular high-school course of studies, i.e., 9.2 percent more than in last school year. The number of students in technical institutes and colleges increased to 254,000—i.e. by 6.1 percent.

The number of apprentices in vocational schools declined by 2.9 percent to 452,000. This is explained above all by the low level of enrollment in the first year, reflecting the enterprises' lack of interest in apprentices as a consequence of the unclear situation regarding apprentice education.

The placing of high-school graduates is becoming a problem. As of 31 December 1990, 5,586 of them had not been placed—i.e. 5.6 percent of the total number.

The foundation of new university faculties, the increased number of newly accepted students, and an extension in the length of studies in some areas are the main factors that contributed to the increase in the number of Czechoslovak regular students enrolled at universities by 7.4 percent to 149,000. The problem with placing university graduates is even more formidable than in the case of high schools—of the 20,392 graduates in 1990, 1,952 still did not have a job at the end of the year, i.e. 9.6 percent of the total.

The number of hospital beds declined in comparison with a year earlier by 1,959 beds to 195,900, and that occurred mostly in the Czech Republic. The reason for the decline, which included all types of health-care institutions, is the constantly increasing range of renovations on hygienic grounds, or improving the work, etc., as a result of neglecting maintenance over the past decades, and the delays in completion of these renovations as well as in new health-care construction.

A significant negative phenomenon last year was the growth of the crime rate. Some 221,400 people were prosecuted for various crimes, i.e. 63.8 percent more than in 1989 (the number of committed crimes was even higher).

On the other hand, the number of persons prosecuted for misdemeanors declined by 33.3 percent to 44,800 but only very few of these cases were cleared—the proportion of known perpetrators in the number of prosecuted was only 30.0 percent.

Last year, the efficiency of the basic branches of material production declined. Industrial production declined by 3.7 percent. The construction industry experienced an even steeper decline (6.6 percent) because it is influenced by the general insecurity regarding the prospects of other branches and fields, and transport also experienced a decline (14.1 percent).

Already at the beginning of the year, the decline in industrial production demonstrated its effect particularly in the heavy industries (coal mining, metallurgy, heavy engineering, chemical engineering, manufacturing of construction materials) but in the third quarter the continuing decline of production in these areas was joined by a decline of production in the consumer-goods industry.

In comparison with 1989, the progressive reduction in the number of employees in both industry and construction accelerated. In addition, work efficiency in both sectors declined (while the average nominal wages increased) Since the savings in material input were insignificant and this was coupled with excessive taxing of the funds, the general efficiency of the economy declined.

Gross agricultural production in comparison with 1989 declined by 3.7 percent. While cereal crops reached record levels, the dearth of moisture resulted in substantially lower crops of potatoes and sugar beets. The central consumer-price adjustments resulted in a decline in demand. The effect is particularly obvious in the demand for slaughter cattle.

The decline in efficiency in the basic sectors also negatively influenced the financial management of organizations and subsequently resulted in some tension in the management of the state budget.

The state budget balance sheet at the end of 1990 shows a deficit of 2.3 billion korunas. This is not a final result of the state budget management as in the next period it will be compensated for by additional revenues from the settling of organizations with the government. Although the planned surplus of kcs5.4 billion will not be achieved, it is expected that the total of the state budgets will eventually close 1990 with a small surplus. The final result will be entered in the state closing balance.

Last year, substantial changes took place in the structure of the economy's organization and in ownership. The subdivision of the former state enterprises and cooperatives combined with the development of new organizations in the private sector resulted in an increased total number of organizations accompanied by a decreased average size in these organizations (the number of state economic organizations grew by 51 percent and that of cooperatives by 15 percent). For example, in construction, where the extent of changes was higher than average, the number of enterprises more than doubled.

The population of the CSFR grew in 1990 by 25,000. Almost the entire growth occurred in the Slovak Republic. The population in the Czech Republic is stagnating.

As of 31 December 1990, the CSFR had 15.675 million inhabitants, of which 10.365 million resided in the Czech Republic and 5.310 million in the Slovak Republic.

National Assembly Deputy Speaker on Press Freedom

AU1903195391 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 15 Mar 91 p 7

[Interview with National Assembly Deputy Speaker Matyas Szuros by Gyorgy Andras Lengyel in Szeged on 14 March: "There Is No Press Without Freedom"—first paragraph is MAGYAR HIRLAP introduction]

[Text] Matyas Szuros met with correspondents of national and local press agencies in Szeged yesterday [14 March], on the occasion of National Press Day, and he gave MAGYAR HIRLAP an exclusive interview.

[Lengyel] Mr. Szuros, do you think that there has been a change of regime and attitude in the press?

[Szuros] I have to state quite clearly that the Hungarian press has done—and is continuing to do—excellent work in order to assist our democratic restructuring. For its part, the freedom of the press is the nation's treasure; it is in the interest of the nation. Without freedom of the press, there can be no free country; therefore, I can only speak of the activities of the press with recognition of their efforts, bearing in mind that this situation is temporary. Indeed, there is no acceptable law today to regulate the activities of the media, and therefore, a press law will inevitably have to be passed as soon as possible. The government is expected to present its proposals this spring.

[Lengyel] Relations between the government and the media are quite strained these days. Do you think there is a danger of the authorities trying to limit the freedom of the press through a new law?

[Szuros] The freedom and independence of the press are in the interest of those in power; the authorities should guarantee the legal conditions for a free and independent press. I do not know whether the government coalition has any hidden intentions, but it would be naive and foolish of the coalition to try and arrange this bill to its own liking. I am not in a position to know what individuals and institutions the government is working with in its preparations, but I definitely think that representatives from the journalists' union and from other interest groups should be consulted in this process.

[Lengyel] People say—particularly in the right wing of the government coalition—that the presence of Robert Maxwell, Rupert Murdoch, and Bartels may lead to the Hungarian press "losing its nationality." Do you think that this is a real danger?

[Szuros] Until now, working capital has mainly been invested in the so-called service sector, including the press. That is particularly significant because a country's public opinion can actually be bought for money. This issue, therefore, really needs to be handled with care. Naturally, the actual proportion of foreign capital is another matter; does it infringe upon the freedom and independence of the press? If financial interests are determined and organized in such a way that the Hungarian press is not handed over to foreign interests, then such a danger cannot exist—as a matter of fact, I do not think that it exists. Given that the press represents both the interests of the nation and the views of average citizens, it serves our democratic development as an almost unique branch of power. Naturally, I use the expression "branch of power" in the figurative sense. Indeed, by reflecting reality, the press also determines politics. There is a particularly great need for this considerable power at the moment, when the authorities seem to be drifting away from the claims of the masses once again, away from reality, as though they were proceeding on their own road. Not so long ago, the press paved the way for a change of regime by banishing inhibitions and breaking taboos. Today, it is by pointing out the weak links in the power chain and expressing the everyday worries and problems of the people that the press can contribute to harmony in society.

[Lengyel] If you had been a member of the committee distributing the Pulitzer and Opus awards, which names would you have put forward?

[Szuros] I am convinced that the jury selected the worthiest people. Personally, my preference would go to the chief editor and staff of 168 ORA [168 HOURS]. Naturally, all outstanding journalists cannot be awarded at the same time. For example, PANORAMA Chief Editor Alajos Chrudinak did not receive any awards, even though he has done an enormous amount of work to create a credible image of Hungarians.

[Lengyel] A definite pro-government daily is about to be published. What do you hope for the editorial staff of this daily?

[Szuros] I hope that it will base itself on truth. The editorial staff of this daily should realize that it cannot merely represent narrow government interests; it also needs to represent the most important interests in Hungarian society. There can be no nostalgia for the monarchy or for the Horthy era; the editorial staff will have to realize that there can be no real democracy in Europe without democratic left-wing forces! Indeed, if this new daily were to unconditionally serve the government, then this would lead to new conflicts. I imagine the press as being truly free, a press that does not follow "cues."

Kadar Holds Briefing on International Trade

LD1903212591 Budapest MTI in English 1945 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Budapest, March 19 (MTI)—The COMECON meeting of March 14-15, Hungary's foreign trade turnover in January and February, and the government's economic policy, were the main topics of a press conference held by Bela Kadar, minister of international economic relations, on Tuesday.

Although all member states agree that COMECON should be wound up, opinion is still divided on the nature of the successor organisation, Kadar said. To clarify these differences, the member states are to hold another meeting in Moscow on April 17-18.

In the first two months of the year, Hungarian exports to the post-socialist countries and the developing countries followed a sharp downward curve. In contrast, Hungary managed to sustain its export drive to the Common market countries. (Sales increased by 18 per cent in the course of a year).

Since trade with the East European countries is expected to drop by 50 per cent this year, the firms who relied on these markets will be up against major problems. In a move to ease tensions, the ministry holds it necessary for the government to extent a life-line to those companies that formulate appropriate market economy schemes. (At present, approximately 500,000 jobs are dependent on eastern trade.) Kadar proposed granting temporary preferential credits to the companies intent on retaining their Soviet market, but their partners are now unable to pay. The president of the National Bank of Hungary has promised to draw up appropriate credit contracts, and the minister of finance will examine the possibilities of upgrading the system of export crediting by the end of the month.

Government Statement on Foreign Debt Repayment

LD1903213191 Budapest MTI in English 1739 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Budapest, March 19 (MTI)—In the wake of an article carried by Monday's issue of the FINANCIAL TIMES on the repayment of Hungarian state debts, the Hungarian Government spokesman asked MTI to release the following statement:

Gyula Horn, chairman of the foreign affairs committee of parliament and president of the opposition Hungarian Socialist Party, was quoted by the FINANCIAL TIMES as saying in an international conference in Vienna that the Hungarian Government was divided over the repayment of foreign debts. The source of the opposition politician's information is unclear. Although there might be differences in the ministers' professional views on economic policy issues, the Hungarian Government is absolutely united and adamant that it should not apply to its creditors for the full or partial cancellation, or indeed suspension, of its foreign debt stock. The government is convinced that such an attempt would upset the Hungarian economy and drastically reduce the standard of living. The Republic of Hungary continues to repay its debts and remains a reliable partner in international economic and financial life.

Budget Committee Chairman on Government Program

AU1903190591 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 15 Mar 91 p 7

[Interview with Attila Karoly Soos, National Assembly Budget Committee chairman and economic expert of the Alliance of Free Democrats, by Peter Lovasz; place and date not given: "The Kupa Program Cannot Become an Economic Guideline—Opposition Agreement With Reservations"—first paragraph is NEPSZAVA introduction]

[Excerpts] At its latest session, the Hungarian Government adopted the economic program submitted by the Finance Ministry; Thus, the professional draft known as the Kupa program has become a government program. We asked Attila Karoly Soos to evaluate the Kupa program.

[Soos] Basically, this program is a step in the right direction. We agree with its goals, all the more so because many of these goals can also be found in the program of the Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ] published prior to the elections. Thus, the acceleration of privatization and the desire to gradually reduce inflation without a shock therapy are correct steps. We also agree with the proposed deregulation that would eliminate many unnecessary and bureaucratic regulations and would also reduce the role played by the state in our economy. It is also a correct goal to gradually achieve full convertibility for the forint. [passage omitted]

[Lovasz] What reservations do you have in connection with this program?

[Soos] The SZDSZ has professional reservations and political concerns. For example, although this program stipulates the acceleration of state property privatization, it does not provide details on how to carry this out. It is generally characteristic of this program that, while it formulates correct goals, it does not attribute adequate attention to the ways in which these goals can be implemented.

Furthermore, it will also be very sensitive politically to determine the tasks of the state. The goal is to see to it that the state administration bill stipulates the tasks of the state and the resources for these tasks. According to the bill, the centralization of income will also decrease along with the reduction of central tasks. [passage omitted]

[Lovasz] The opponents of the bill also claim that this program is based on unrealistic foreign economic conditions.

[Soos] It is certain that the collapse of the CEMA market has led to much more serious consequences than originally anticipated. [passage omitted]

[Lovasz] Can you foresee a situation in which this Kupa program is accepted both by the parliamentary parties and the forces outside the National Assembly, including the society at large?

[Lovasz] I do not see any possibility for such an overall consensus mainly because I do not think this program will be adequately supported by the government parties. Besides, in the debate on specific issues, it will turn out that, because of the political intentions and the current balance of forces, this program cannot become a guideline in the restructuring of our economic management; on the contrary, this program might give an opportunity to delay the aforementioned restructuring.

Polish Defense Minister Arrives, Begins Talks

LD1803142291 Budapest MTI in English 1319 GMT 18 Mar 91

[Text] Budapest, March 18 (MTI)—Rear-Admiral Piotr Kolodziejczyk, Polish minister of national defence, arrived in Budapest on Monday, at the head of a delegation, on a three-day official visit. The minister is responding to an invitation from Hungarian Minister of Defence Lajos Fur.

The Polish military delegation has begun talks in the Ministry of Defence.

Received by Antall

LD1903220891 Budapest MTI in English 1856 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Budapest, March 19 (MTI)—Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall met Rear-Admiral Piotr Kolodziejczyk, minister of defence of the Republic of Poland, on Tuesday [19 March]. The meeting was attended by Lajos Fur, Hungarian minister of defence, and Maciej Kozminski, ambassador of Poland to Hungary.

The parties surveyed the full scope of Polish-Hungarian relations, and coordinated their positions on the European security system.

Both parties emphasized the significance of the bilateral military treaty to be signed on Wednesday, which may promote stability in the region.

National Bank President on Trade With USSR

LD1903230191 Budapest Domestic Service in Hungarian 1900 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] The Hungarian-Soviet trade is narrowing very rapidly said the president of the National Bank of Hungary.

Gyorgy Suranyi talked at the seminar which considered the economic prospects in Eastern Europe. He stated that there are funds to pay for the Soviet imports to Hungary and we are paying for the goods in hard currency. It is, however, very difficult to export, therefore the export of goods is expected to be reduced by half again, said Gyorgy Suranyi in Brussels.

Reportage on Goncz's Visit to Belgium

WA1903201891

For reportage on the visit by President Arpad Goncz to Belgium, including reports on his talks with Hungarians living in Belgium, see the Benelux section of the 19 March West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Solidarity Presidium Members Resign

LD1903235491 Warsaw Domestic Service in Polish 2200 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The Presidium of Independent Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity National Commission meeting in Gdansk today familiarized itself with the results of work by Sejm commissions on the trade union and collective dispute resolution draft laws. Strike restrictions introduced in the law as well as the insignificant sanctions for breaking the trade union law were critically assessed. This creates, it was stated, a danger for the freedom of trade union action, particularly in small private enterprises. The so-called (?full) members of the Presidium responsible for certain spheres of activity submitted their resignation during the meeting. They are Wojciech Arkuszewski, who deals with economic policy; Bogdan Lis, responsible for foreign affairs; Janusz Palubicki, responsible for finances; as well as Stefan Jurczak, who resigned from his post as deputy chairman, but remains in the Presidium as the head of one of the largest regions. Lech Kaczynski resigned from the post of deputy chairman earlier. Presidium members put themselves at the disposal of the chairman and the national commission, which announced it would make relevant personnel changes in the union's leadership at a meeting to be held tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Merkel, Kaczynski Comment on Job Changes

AU1903140491 Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 14 Mar 91 pp 1,2

[Piotr Adamowicz report: "Following The Changes In The Presidential Office"]

[Text] Asked to explain why he had quit the post of minister of state for security and comment on Lech Kaczynski's appointment as his successor, Jacek Merkel was very sparing with his words. All he said was that he was being sent on vacation, and Kaczynski would be filling this post during his vacation. He did not say when he would return, and refused to comment on the entire matter. Asked whether it was right to quit on the same day as the important talks with General Moiseyev, Merkel said, "Those talks had nothing to do with it. The decision was made earlier."

Lech Kaczynski said he was surprised at the news that he was to become minister of state for security. "I found out one hour before the official communique," he said. "It is obvious for President Walesa to appoint people close to him to such important posts. Merkel was such a man, and so am I. The new 'Solidarity' chairman's words put an end to my activity in the union's leadership. I am not assuming this post with a feeling of triumph. Just because we are brothers, does it mean we have to have restrictions on political and civic rights? I have had other job offers. I had completely different plans, but my loyalty toward President Walesa and Poland made me agree to accept this post. I prefer not to say anything about it until I have acquainted myself with it. But I do want to say that my appointment has speeded up the political campaign that is based on well-known political differences, in other words, personal disagreements."

"Will it be difficult for you to change from a trade union activist to a state activist?"

"Just as difficult as it was for my predecessor."

"Was the day of important talks with the Soviet Union the right time to quit?"

"That is a question for the president. I guess he had his reasons, but he is under no obligation to explain them, and neither am I."

Presidential Spokesman Comments on Staff Changes

AU1903205291 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 15 Mar 91 p 1

[Kazimierz Groblewski report: "Separation of Party and State Functions"]

[Text] Presidential Spokesman Andrzej Drzycimski said Thursday, 14 March, that no personnel changes in the Presidential Office are expected in the near future, but added that this does not mean that there will be no changes.

He said that Lech Walesa intends to appoint Bogdan Lis to a post in the Presidential Office. He said that the president was still to decide which post he should be appointed to, but it will undoubtedly be an important one. However, the presidential spokesman firmly rejected suggestions that Bogdan Lis would replace Janusz Ziolkowski, minister of state with responsibility for international relations.

We asked Bogdan Lis himself to comment on the statement. He confirmed that he had received an offer from the president. The nature of the post that he will occupy will depend on whether or not the International Relations Secretariat is removed from the Presidential Chancellery and placed directly under Lech Walesa himself. If so, then Bogdan Lis will hold the post of secretary of state in the secretariat, if not, he will hold the post of under secretary of state. He added that this did not mean that Janusz Ziolkowski would stop working in the secretariat. Should the secretariat be removed from the chancellery, then Ziolkowski would be nominated for the post of minister of state.

Bogdan Lis said that he will decide whether to accept the offer by 20 March, that is, once a meeting of the "Solidarity" National Commission has taken place.

Andrzej Drzycimski said that Jacek Merkel has not disappeared from the president's view. Lech Walesa wants to use him again as quickly as possible. Drzycimski said that he did not, however, know in what capacity. The presidential spokesman said that Jacek Merkel would undoubtedly play an important role in the future.

The spokesman said that it was not true that Lech Kaczynski had been appointed to the post of minister of state for security previously occupied by Jacek Merkel with the proviso that he was to hold the post temporarily. Lech Kaczynski will decide for himself whether, like his predecessor, he will also hold the post of secretary of the National Defense Committee at the same time. Drzycimski said: "The president does not go into these matters. I know that various proposals are being considered and one is that Maciej Zalewski should be secretary of the National Defense Committee."

Andrzej Drzycimski said that he did not exclude the possibility that one of the Presidential Chancellery employees may decide to devote himself to politics. He cited Jacek Maziarski, who must now decide where his place is, as an example.

Asked whether he envisaged Jaroslaw Kaczynski resigning from the post of head of the Presidential Chancellery, Drzycimski said that Jaroslaw Kaczynski must define his role himself. He added: "If he says that he will be active in politics, then he should resolve certain issues. He should make a decision and act accordingly."

President Walesa Leaves on U.S. Trip

LD1903190491 Warsaw PAP in English 1655 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Warsaw, March 19—Polish President Lech Walesa, accompanied by his wife, left for an eight-day official state visit to the U.S. aboard a special plane this morning.

His entourage includes Ministers of Foreign Affairs Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Foreign Economic Relations- Dariusz Ledworowski, Privatisation-Janusz Lewandowski, Internal Affairs- Henryk Majewski and Industry Andrzej Zawislak as well as State Secretaries at the Presidential Chancellery Slawomir Siwek and Janusz Ziolkowski.

Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, who bid farewell to the president at the airport, told newsmen that this visit would be different from the one Walesa had paid to the U.S in 1989.

"At that time Walesa was greeted as a Solidarity man, architect of the idea of freedom and advocate of values that are of fundamental importance for the democratic world. Now America will greet the president of Poland, a country which consistently restructures its economy, which has embarked upon a road leading to democracy and a market economy," Bielecki said.

Arrives in Washington

LD2003100291 Warsaw PAP in English 2331 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Washington, March 19—Polish President Lech Walesa, his wife Danuta, and a group of accompanying personalities arrived in Washington late in the afternoon today.

A special plane with the delegation aboard landed at the Andrews Air-Force Base outside Washington from where the guests were flown by two helicopters to the Washington Monument in city centre for a welcoming by Secretary of State James Baker.

After the welcoming ceremony the Polish guests were driven to Blair House, the official residence of U.S. President's guests situated across the street from the White House.

The agenda for Wednesday comprises a welcoming ceremony in front of the White House with brief speeches by Lech Walesa and George Bush, a face to face conversation of both presidents followed by talks between larger delegations, and signing a declaration on Polish-U.S. relations.

Britain's Hogg on 'Useful' Warsaw Meetings

LD1903210691 Warsaw PAP in English 1647 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Warsaw, March 19—The visiting British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Douglas Hogg praised his talks in Warsaw as very useful after meetings with Sejm (lower house) Speaker Mikolaj Kozakiewicz, members of Parliament, senators and Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski held between March 17 and 19.

"We discussed a variety of topics including security in Europe, further relations between Poland and the European Community, and Poland and NATO, and progress made in your country towards the political and economic change," he told newsmen today.

"I have been much impressed by the genuine commitment to the democratic and accountable system of government in Poland," he said and added that "we need to take every opportunity to deepen and intensify the relations that exist between Poland and European institutions" which "can clearly play a part in assisting the democratic processes in Poland."

In his opinion the reduction of Polish debt would be a very important factor greatly increasing the ability of the Polish Government to ever more effectively restructure the Polish economy and pay off the remaining debt.

Yet he said there are no immediate prospects for Poland to become a NATO member in a short time or that NATO would give Poland any assurances or guarantees of her Western frontiers.

"We have to put relations between Poland and NATO countries as a whole and between Poland and each NATO country individually on equal footing," Hogg said.

The minister added that the British Government has no plans at the moment to relax the visa regime towards the Poles in the near future.

On the other hand, the British Know How Fund will continue to assist the Polish privatization processes.

Asked to comment on the forthcoming visit to be paid by President Lech Walesa to Britain the coming April, Hogg said Walesa will be a very welcome guest and it would be a milestone in the long-standing relations between Poland and the U.K.

"I think that our relations with Poland are in a sense deeper than those with many other East European countries because our history touched so often and that we have a very large Polish community in Britain. I regard our relations with Poland as very good though they clearly can yet be deepened."

As for possible British investments in Poland which are still not very significant, Hogg said that his ministry gets a remarkably growing number of enquiries in Britain about the business opportunities in Poland.

Views Country's Security Issues

LD1903230291 Warsaw TVP Television Network in Polish 2143 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Interview with Douglas Hogg, British secretary of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs, by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] Douglas Hogg, British secretary of state for foreign and commonwealth affairs, has been talking in Warsaw about issues of security in Europe, our relations with European institutions and with NATO, the development of the situation in the Soviet Union, and Polish reforms.

The British minister spoke about the way he was impressed with Poland's attachment to the idea of democracy and restructuring the economy in the free-market spirit.

[Reporter] Could you comment on Mrs. Thatcher's recent statement that Poland could be admitted to NATO?

[Hogg, in English fading to Polish translation] I do not think that in the immediate future there would be such a possibility or that this would be appropriate for Poland, just as NATO cannot provide guarantees for the Polish borders. Such a policy would irritate the Soviet Union. For the time being, we have to extend relations between Warsaw and the NATO states—collectively with the pact and individually with each state. It is a question of development of contacts between Poland and the NATO states.

Bielecki Talks With European Parliament Official

LD1903204991 Warsaw PAP in English 1607 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Warsaw, March 19—Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki received here today chairman of the European Parliament's delegation for contacts with Poland Eduardo Punset.

After the meeting, Prime Minister Bielecki, member of the Presidium of the National Board of the Liberal-Democratic Congress, said that his guest was interested in the implementation of the Polish reforms as well as in the goals and expectations of the liberal movement.

In Punset's opinion, the decision on the debt reduction is a sign that Poland gains recognition thanks to her economic reform.

Punset stressed that the economic reform should be an advantage in negotiations with governments of the EC member countries on Poland's association with the EC. Poland should be a member of this community, Punset said.

Eduardo Punset also met today with Chairman of the Democratic Union Deputies' Club Bronislaw Geremek.

Rakowski's Soviet Press Remarks Denounced

LD1903201391 Warsaw TVP Television Network in Polish 1830 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] After today's proceedings of the Council of Ministers, a news conference was given by the government press spokesman.

[Begin spokesman Zarebski recording] Today's Polish press, the ZYCIE WARSZAWY, has published an excerpt from an interview with Mieczyslaw Rakowski given in the Soviet Union to the RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA; it appeared on 14 March. In the interview, Rakowski warns the Soviet Union, I quote, God forbid you should follow the Polish road. It would be madness for the Soviet Union to enter the Polish path. He says that a wave of anti-Sovietism is being artificially whipped up in Polish society and presents a gloomy picture of Polish economic, social and political reality.

I appraise this material to be contrary to Polish interests and harmful for Polish-Soviet relations. Of not insignificant importance here is the fact that this is being said by a communist politician who until recently held the prime minister's office. The results of this prime ministry are known to us. This is a fact especially harmful in the context—and I can already state this today—of Prime Minister Bielecki's visit to Moscow, planned for early April. [end recording]

Liberal Congress Seeks Break From Center Accord

AU2003083391 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 15 Mar 91 p 2

["LAW" report: "The Liberals Defend the Reforms And The Government"]

[Text] The Liberal Democratic Congress [KLD] wants to take part in the parliamentary elections in a liberal election bloc created by itself and abandon the Center Accord coalition. Until the autumn elections it will support the government, whose reform policy is, in the KLD's opinion, "threatened by a wave of populist criticism dominated by the slogan to fight the wage growth tax," a fight in which the Center Accord is taking part. Jacek Maziarski, head of the Center Accord's board of management, claims that the KLD's opinion is a part of the "routine political contest that precedes any election."

On Wednesday, the KLD Presidium decided that the time left until the elections should be "filled by efforts to preserve the free-market direction of the reforms and privatization." This meeting was attended by Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, as KLD leader; and Janusz Lewandowski, minister of ownership transformations.

KLD Press Spokesman Andrzej Halicki told us that the KLD will not set off for the elections together with the Center Accord, which the liberals have left recently. "The reason is not just the fact that the Center Accord has changed into a single party," Halicki explained, "but also because the ideas of Jaroslaw Kaczynski and the team of presidential advisers are a danger to the reform implemented by the present government.

"The differences in views concern, among other things, the wage growth tax, which the government insists on keeping in force for the time being," Halicki explained. He also said his party cannot agree to the general reprivatization called for by the Center Accord. "We also want reprivatization, but to a sensible extent," he said.

"The populist wave of criticism under the slogan 'fight the wage growth tax' is dangerous especially because the government is being attacked not only by the Center Accord and Christian-National Union, but also by the left wing—the Social Democratic Party of the Republic of Poland, and the National Trade Union Confederation.

In the autumn election, the Congress wishes to participate independently, or in a liberal bloc created by itself, a bloc containing other liberal groups. "We are open to all initiatives," said Halicki, adding that he would like to see in this bloc some of the groups that currently belong to the Forum of the Democratic Right, Democratic Party, and Conservative-Liberal Party.

Jacek Maziarski, new head of the Center Accord board, insists that no split has occurred in the ruling coalition. He still thinks the Center Accord is not in opposition to the government. "The stance of the liberals stems from their desire to erase their own identity before the congress," Maziarski said. "The liberals have said before that they want to go to the elections independently, that is why we never offered them a coalition."

Newspaper Comments on Tyminski's 'Party X'

AU1903185991 Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 15 Mar 91 p 1

[Piotr Skwiecinski commentary: "A Highly Secretive 'Party X'"]

[Text] Holding the parliamentary elections in the fall is obviously increasing Tyminski's chances of success in the elections, because society's frustration will increase by then, and the popularity of the post-Solidarity groups will decline. A few extra months will give Tyminski time to marshal his forces.

Nevertheless, his success is not at all certain. The appointment of his "Party X" has long been expected. Tyminski is late, but probably not just because of his own fluctuations. One can assume it is very difficult to create such a political group, not just because of the lack of potential voters, but also because it is difficult to create a party apparatus out of the people who did vote for Tyminski. It is difficult to find candidate deputies who would represent public opinion without embarrassment

These factors, coupled with the controversial personality of the new party's leader, permit the assumption that "Party X" will turn out to be a political humbug. It seems more probable, however, that it will make a firm but short-lived impression on Polish public life.

FSN Continues To Battle Internal Difficulties

Stoica on Dissidence Within Party

AU1903170391 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1607 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991—On the National Salvation Front [FSN] break-away parliamentarians, the executive president of the National Salvation Front's Steering Board, Ion Aurel Stoica, told a ROMPRES editor: "The best thing that I can say is to thank the breakaway parliamentarians. Above all I take it as evidence of honesty. I will not make any insinuation, but they may be so "to the left" that they cannot find their place in FSN ideology and political programme. But I would be insincere if [I] did not confess to a kind of regret, that of their lack of courage. I reckon it would have been natural for them to make their move during our party's convention."

Brucan on Party's 'Struggle'

AU1903180691 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1616 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991— People wanted to see, well-known politologist Silviu Brucan appreciates, whether the first political act of the new party would break away with the past or whether it would be just a revised and enlarged edition of the Communist Party of sad remembrance.

The two tendencies have been felt, FSN's [National Salvation Front] so-called ideologist writes in today's copy of independent daily "ADEVARUL," ever since the period of preparation of the convention, by a fierce struggle (...) between the "young Turks" who favoured reforms and the followers of Martian, Barladeanu and other Political Academy graduates desperately clinging to the high positions of the nomenklatura.

Reformers have won, the author writes, but, like everywhere else and in all parties, the imperative to save the unity left its mark on the new party leaders.

I could not say, Mr. Brucan adds, that debates have been very elevated. Indeed, neither the motion nor the leaders' addresses called for such a thing, although they could have displayed more attractive items on the market. Which leads to the pessimistic remark that the demand of the consumers in the audience did not force them to be competitive either. Improvisation prevailed in political rhetoric and the shortage of ideas faithfully reflected the general shortage on the market.

As for the new party's democratic structure, one must welcome that provision in the statute which tries to find a balance between discipline and tolerance. There, the supporters of breaking away with the past have won a political victory of national importance, since the rigid monolithism, inherited also by the opposition parties, has led to the tragical fragmentation of some, Mr. Brucan concludes.

Convention Reported 'Contradictorily'

AU1903215891 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 2120 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991—The Bucharest dailies echo differently and sometimes contradictorily the results of the first National Convention of the ruling National Salvation Front [FSN], held on 16 and 17 March in Bucharest.

ADEVARUL (independent and considered by observers as pro-presidential and pro-governmental): "Between the consistency with the political line and the consistency with the governing principles, there was room for various viewpoints, but in the crucial issues, consensus was dominant (...)—the Front has thus proved capable to admit its mistakes and to learn their lessons (...). Some attitudes were obviously of communist inspiration, such as the opposition detectable in some of the interventions on the motion to approve partial compensations for the former factory owners. And it must be said that the accusation FSN: RCP [Romanian Communist Party—PCR] is founded on such particular attitudes (...). Several speakers confused the principles of statal organisation with those underlying party organisation.

DIMINEATA (Information and democratic opinion daily, seen as pro- presidential): The need was felt for some ideological principles. The fact that the FSN adheres to the social-democratic principles may not mean much to millions of Romanians that know not many good things about social-democracy (...). We are ready to discuss and accept the arguments of those that yell "you'll eat what you vote" on condition that they too accept that a community eats what and as much as it produces.

ROMANIA LIBERA (independent daily, viewed as the strongest opposition newspaper): The Front has become a political centrifugal force. The treatment applied by Mr. Petre Roman to the FSN for its recovery augments its rotation speed round its own axis. But how can "losses" be counteracted? By centrally run mechanisms. Now the FSN has become an instrument in the hands of the government. Tomorrow it could simply turn into the party of one man, the premier's party and therefore, irrespective of its stated political leaning, the expression of a new political totalitarianism (...) by dilation and dilution, the Front has become a heterogeneous movement (...). The seizure of power marks the moment wherefrom intestine competition for power becomes dramatic and chronical (...). The not-so-long-ago representatives of the Front have, for various reasons, come into open conflict with the government members, who have assumed party leadership (...). Concomitantly with a more and more obvious detachment of the government from the presidential institution, the "pro-Iliescu group," self-titled "more left-oriented," intensified its activity. The resistance of the premier's supporters has, in turn, become more resolute. Sooner or later, some of them will turn to the Socialist Party of Labour (PSM). Nationalist trends met the opposition of those who

pursue a clear-minded, rational and poised policy towards the Hungarian minority. Some of them will probably turn to Mr. Ceontea ("Vatra Romaneasca's" president). What the front wants is the intellectual vein. Up to a point, this may justify, by necessity, autocratic leadership, centralism (...). A party coup in the true sense of the word. It has deep meanings. Broadly speaking, the organisation of the convention was occult. This convention looked curiously much like an RCP congress (...). At the price of escalating the centrifugal power, at losing a large number of supporters, Mr. Roman cut the Gordian Knot and it would be no surprise if he achieved a series of remarkable results. More than anything, in the dispute with Mr. Ion Iliescu—that is with the leftist tendencies—the game seems definitely won.

LIBERTATEA ("the first free newspaper of the Romanian revolution" considered, until not long ago pro-Front but less so recently): The "velvet" convention ... In mid-lent, an idea vigorously brandished was that of a "fight for the big bone," which seems to have dominated the Front's structures (...). After repeated postponements and summoned in great haste, the convention performed in a tense atmosphere, without, however, reaching the suspected break. (...) the tacit struggle inside its structures did not break out, due to Premier Roman who once more played the arbiter. He did it at a moment when the protests of the street and of the political opposition sent their reverberations into the ranks of his own party. Which may mean either that these protests stem from unrefutable facts or that the range of options is much wider than a party can structurally allow for. The widening gap between the government's reformism and the parliamentary conservatism leaves more and more room for the dissatisfaction with the low standard of territorial administrative echelons, with forsaking political aims for practical interests, with keeping or tolerating compromised or compromising persons in the apparatus. The winner's "complex" seems to have decisively marked the Frontists' position, who have professed a "wait-and-see" attitude and even a sort of retractility before critical situations, which diminished their representativity and credibility. Ten months after winning the elections, the Front is apprehensively counting its adherents, looking for adequate means to keep those it has rather than to win others over. (...) the complex mechanism of the reform, in which the Frontist government has involved itself bag and baggage, threatens to become a battle on the outcome of which its very existence hangs. The convention has proved there is some stirring in the Front (line) but that the stirring at present can be translated into party internal democracy. It remains to be seen whether, in its new organisational structure, the Front will succeed in overcoming, without major shakeups, the great stumble block of the 1 April price liberalisation. This promises to be not only a test for the ideological cohesion of the ruling party, but also a test for the democratic process triggered by the revolution. Reform or populism? This seems to be the question to which an answer can no longer be deferred.

Communique Issued on Deputies' Withdrawal

AU2003101791 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0958 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Communique issued by the National Salvation Front Press Department; place and date not given]

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 20/3/1991—In connection with the statement made by the nine National Salvation Front [FSN] deputies to withdraw from that party's parliamentary group and form another parliamentary group, the National Salvation Front Press Department states inter alia:

The National Salvation Front National Convention adopted with a significant majority of votes (988 for, 58 against) the motion "A Future for Romania" presented by the national leader which included the principles of our political formation's identity and programme. The delegates also adopted the statute of the National Salvation Front which sanctions the freedom of opinion and the right to existence of minority options within the party. The National Convention itself represented a first opportunity to check in practice the virtues of pluralism of ideas and of the open, constructive dialogue. That is why the appreciations concerning a so-called ignorance of the democratic norms in drafting and adopting the documents are groundless. They intend in fact to justify that action outside the party framework of the signatories of that statement.

The National Salvation Front does not include two political programmes and two statutes. This is why, through their action, the signatories of the statement place themselves outside the party and the National Salvation Front's parliamentary group. Epousing of the proclamation of the National Salvation Front Council of December 1989 and of the National Salvation Front programme-platform is an act of political diversion, of demagogic exploitation of the difficulties in the transition period meant to create confusion among the FSN partisans and to ban the clarifications which represented the main objective of the National Convention.

Those who believed that the National Salvation Front was a front of personal salvation, who acted to preserve the old bankrupt structures were wrong, because the National Salvation Front is a party that breaks off with the totalitarian system and builds a new economic, social and political reality apt to ensure the human freedom and democracy, prosperity and social protection.

Journalists Voice Concern on Press Bill to Roman

AU1903095391 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 13 Mar 91 p 1

[Telegram from the National Convention of Journalists to Prime Minister Roman in Brazil; signed in Bucharest on 12 March]

[Text] Mr. Prime Minister: The National Convention of Journalists in Romania notes with concern the intensification of attempts aimed against freedom of [the] press and the alarming increase of joint government and Parliament actions to obstruct freedom of opinion and freedom of speech.

Completely ignoring the charter on freedom of the press—which, as a matter of fact, you accepted as well—currently the government is promoting a draft "Law on the Penalty for Offenses Against Freedom of the Press" which, if endorsed, will represent a flagrant violation of the freedom of democratic thinking, of the ideals of the 1989 December revolution, and of the international documents signed by Romania.

The National Convention of Journalists in Romania, Bucharest 12 March 1991

Association Protests 'Against New Press Bill'

AU1903170791 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1610 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 19/3/1991—Set up to the end of promoting free exchange of information, according to the declaration of human rights, the Jean Louis Calderon Association headquartered in Brasov, sustains the statement of the convention of journalists of Romania and protests "against the new press bill," demanding the immediate withdrawal from the Parliament of the respective bill. It also "warns the fellow journalists all over the world about the arbitrary attempts to check the freedom of the press, from the soaring prices of newsprint and printing services and up to the present bill. It also asks the journalists' fora and organizations to start actions in support of the freedom of the press in Romania."

Government Withdraws Press Bill From Parliament

AU1903214591 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 2049 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 19/3/1991—A release of the National Convention of Journalists of Romania shows that negotiations were conducted at the government headquarters between the representatives of the National Convention of Journalists of Romania and Adrian Severin, minister for reform, empowered by the executive to make decisions on the bill on sanctioning press excesses. Pursuant to negotiations, it was decided:

1. Withdrawal from the Parliament of the bill .

2. The National Convention of Journalists shall adopt a deontological code that should contain also guarantees to prevent media abuses and excesses.

3. The Penal Code that is comprised for the moment of instruments enough to this effect is expected to be extended with practical norms resulted from the journalists' deontological code.

4. A general regulation of the institution of moral damages is necessary.

5. The meetings between the representatives of the National Convention of Journalists and the government representatives shall be made permanent.

6. Also, the system of consultations on legislative matters (both on themes and technicalities), in the domain of specific legal norms for the press, between the representatives of the National Convention of Journalists and the government shall be permanent.

Roman on 'Final Stage' of Price Liberalization

AU1903203591 Bucharest Domestic Service in Romanian 1800 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Statement by Prime Minister Petre Roman on 19 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] The government meeting, which began at 1520, ended an hour ago. The meeting was attended by our country's president, Mr. Ion Iliescu.

At the end of the meeting, Prime Minister Petre Roman made the following statement for our listeners:

[Roman] Today's government meeting was of great importance. It dealt with a very special issue, because we had to make a final decision on the final stage of price liberalization. This stage concerns, as is known, basic necessities for families—mainly foodstuffs. We have worked and discussed these measures with great care and under conditions of crisis, and we have tried to cope with economic phenomena, which very often are contradictory: on the one hand the economic situation that is still facing a crisis that poses great difficulties and on the other hand the need to reduce, as much possible, the shock for the population.

Consequently, starting from these objectives—on the one hand overcoming the economic crisis and beginning relaunching the economy that will then enable social protection to function to a great extent, because social protection can function properly only in a sound economy, an economy that is developing, an economy that is growing, and on the other hand we have to bear in mind the fact that the people have to be able to cope with the prices which match this price liberalization stage. [sentence as heard]

To cut speculations short that have circled—which actually were not only speculations, but often just particles of versions that were studied—certainly radical views emerged within these versions, which, from the point of view of our country's financial soundness, would have corresponded to more favorable situations, but which, as I said before, would have posed great difficulties at the social level.

Bearing in mind that an imperative of ours was to maintain the deficit of public expenditure, the budget deficit, within tolerable limits—the only way to protect

ourselves against their explosion and the only way to protect ourselves against a dissolution of the economic situation—we arrived at the following conclusions that I want to present to the whole country.

What is at stake is to limit, to impose maximum tolerable limits on retail prices of basic foodstuffs. I would like to quote the most significant examples:

—Pork meat, first quality—I am talking of retail prices: 90 lei per one kilogram;
—Beef, first quality: 100 lei per one kg;
—Chicken, without head or legs: 60 lei per one kg;
—Eggs, maximum price: 3 lei per egg;
—Drinking milk: 10 lei per liter;
—Butter: 25 lei per 200 grams;
—Sheep cheese: 100 lei per kg;
—Cow cheese: 60 lei per kg;
—Crystal sugar: 32 lei per kg;
—Sunflower oil: 40 lei per liter;
—French bread, 500 grams: 9 lei per loaf.

As announced from the very beginning of the government program, compensations will be granted for these price increases. Compensations will increase compared with those granted during the first stage of price liberalization as follows:

—For employees from 750 to some 1,200 lei
—For pensioners from 400 to some 1,400 lei;
—Scholarships for pupils and students will thus register an increase of 500 lei each;
—Social allowances register an increase of 360 lei each;
—Finally, children's allowances register an increase of 200 lei each;
—Maternity allowances register an increase of 1,000 lei for each mother.

One thing that is important, because these compensations and the way they are granted differ—for an employee, for instance, they depend on the enterprise in which he works, while in the case of pensioners and the other categories they come from the budget. We decided that half of the compensation—that is, the one referring to advance pay—should be paid in advance beginning 29 March, this month. On the other hand, we agreed on a number of measures to eliminate phenomena that justifiably worry the people and that concern corruption, incomes through profiteering, and other illegal means. Thus, to stop any kind of tendency toward stockpiling foodstuffs before the date when these prices will come into force—that is, the first day of April—tangible measures have been worked out to prevent this tendency of stockpiling foodstuffs, including required punitive measures.

The government is also working on a decision on hard currency evasion. This means that the hard currency that should be cashed by the country from sale of export products should really be cashed so that we do not face situations—as we currently face—when this currency flows into other banks abroad.

Another decision deals with fiscal tax evasion, which refers specifically to those people who achieve incomes from various activities—especially trade but not only trade activities—without declaring their real value; the result is a fiscal tax evasion because they do not pay the taxes stipulated by law.

Bearing in mind the tension connected with procuring durable goods, we also discussed a system of granting credits, that is the possibility—especially for certain social categories such as young people, for example, but not only they—to buy such goods as furniture, housing, or automobiles; this will indeed make things easier for them.

In conclusion, I want to say that this has been a difficult and complicated time for this government. To ensure the success of this formula, which we view as one of balance between the two situations I have mentioned and which are both objective—in other words, to find this balance we have worked with great devotion and a determination which I view as exemplary for what has to happen in our country: Let all of us focus on serious and disciplined work to make our economy overcome the deadlock.

President Iliescu Issues Statement

AU2003083691 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1954 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Statement by President Ion Iliescu during a break in the government meeting on 19 March; place not given—all quotation marks as received]

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 19/3/1991— "Like the premier said, the moment of the second stage of price liberalization has been expected with worry and concern by everybody. The information circulated has generated tension with public opinion, a tension which was manifest in various forms. "Sure, there are two aspects here: On the one hand it is about the course of the economic reform, about the price liberalization which is one facet of this action, plus the pay liberalization now. On the other hand, there is the social issue of social costs. The government program, just as the reform program worked out even before the elections, the program of many political formations and of the National Salvation Front [FSN] stress the preoccupation to blend the two aspects, meaning to provide new, sound bases to the economy, and to ensure the efficiency of the economic activity, while keeping the costs within the limits of the possibilities of the economy.

"I have demanded to participate in the final discussion in the government in which option was made for the variant that suits best in point of dovetailing the two aspects. I think the formula reached is apt to ease the social tension, to ensure for the economic units the necessary levers for a normal run of the activity. It is a process that will continue in the years ahead in order to lay the economic activity upon far more efficient bases. For the time being, we witness in this respect a certain decrease of industrial production that has not been

stopped. So, the measures being taken, concerted with other ones, must lead this year to a refloating of economic activity. I think these measures will be well understood by public opinion" the president said." The natural result of all this should be the mobilization of the productive factors, the organization of the productive activity in industry and agriculture in such a manner as to ensure already this year the beginning of the refloating of the national economy and its provision with rational foundations.

Baltazar on Price Liberalization, Moldova Poll

AU1903170991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1617 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 19/3/1991—With reference to the impending start of the second stage of price liberalization, Government Spokesman Bogdan Baltazar stated in his weekly news briefing that the government would discuss in its today's meeting three variants, differing by degrees of radicalness, of the liberalization, which would, however, be compensated for, all of them, as regards both the state-budgeted institutions and the private economic agents.

With reference to possible street movements, Spokesman Baltazar showed that the price liberalization policy was one of the factors responsible for the IMF credits in support to Romania, so, to give up the liberalization would mean to renounce that support.

The government spokesman also stated that given that the government was first of all an emanation of the National Salvation Front [FSN], which made the majority in the Parliament, its stand on the events in the Republic of Moldova, expressed in the resolution endorsed at the FSN National Convention, was also the government's stand.

Spokesman Baltazar announced that the process of setting up commercial companies and autonomous companies would be concluded by the end of March when the government would submit to the parliament the privatization bill for approval, which would finally allow for the distribution of the bonds provided for in Law No. 15/1990.

ACI Warns Parliament To Pay Attention to Laws

AU1903154991 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 14 Mar 91 p 2

["Protest Motion" signed by the "15 November" Provisional Coordinating Commission of the Inter-Trade Union Confederative Alliance; place and date not given]

[Text] The "15 November" Inter-Trade Union Confederative Alliance (ACI) expresses its disapproval of the biased way in which Romania's legislative forum treats the social laws and the laws on the rights and freedoms of trade union organizations and cannot accept any compromise in the field of laws—trade union rights and social protection being elements that are not negotiable.

Here, ACI "15 November" seriously warns the legislative forum, the admnistration bodies, and the state power about the tendencies shown in connection with transferring the entire economic burden to the same employees who had to suffer the most during the old dictatorship.

ACI "15 November" expresses the strongest protests against the very aggressive attitude of the legislative forum and the executive power toward the trade union movement that is claiming its rights to a free existence and a decent living and protests against dragging the court of justice and the institution of the Romanian Radio Television in this dispute—on the side of the current leadership—because all these might cause a final break between those who are governing and the ones who are governed.

ACI "15 November" calls on the current leadership to devote greater attention to the trade union's claims, not resort to threats and intimidation but to assume total responsibility for the serious deterioration of national economy and for the drastic worsening of the people's standard of living, **especially that of pensioners and students.**

ACI "15 November" demands the immediate abrogation of all laws adopted in suspicious haste that seriously harm the rights and interests of the union—meaning the interests of the majority of the people; likewise, it demands that a joint permanent **trade union-Parliament** commission be set up immediately.

The future laws regarding social and civic rights and the freedom of trade union activity must be published still in its draft form and must be submitted for **public debate.**

ACI "15 November" is determined to resort to all means of trade union struggle to defend its rights in accordance with its own STATUTE and with the International Conventions.

To prevent a **general strike** of all trade unions that belong to the ACI "15 November" we **urgently** call for solutions to the aforementioned demands.

The Provisional Coordinating Commission of the Inter-Trade Union Confederative Alliance "15 November"

Student Leader Marian Munteanu Steps Down

AU1903214091 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 2043 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991—The Romanian students' leader Marian Munteanu announced his decision to step down from the leadership of the Students' National League, at the two-days' meeting of the Students' Leagues Confederation, held in Bucharest.

The announcement, made shortly after he had publicly renounced at the position of president of the Students' League of the University of Bucharest, was of a nature, writes "TINERETUL LIBER," that created a rather difficult situation as "none of the participants could fill in for the former leader at the same value standard." Therefore, mentioned the quoted daily, the proceedings were permanently under the sign of failure. Discussions however took a normal course only after Marian Munteanu and Mihai Gheorghiu, who has also given up his leading functions, staying on as mere guests, monitored the meeting through their interventions. Lastly, an executive group of the National Council of the League was elected, to which Marian Munteanu is no longer a member.

Defense Requests Acquittal of Former Communists

AU1903162791 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1505 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991—The trial of the former Politburo members for the charge of genocide continued on Monday, March 18, with the lawyers' conclusions. The session included conclusions about defendants Stefan Andrei, Nicolae Constantin, Silviu Curticeanu, Gheorghe David, Miu Dobrescu, Suzana Gadea, Mihai Gere, Constantin Olteanu, Gheorghe Pana and Dumitru Popescu.

The defence pleaded for the defendants to be acquitted, appreciating both the charge of genocide as per indictment and the charge of instigation to aggravated murder as proposed by the prosecution's substantive conclusions last session had not been proved.

Referring to the charge of genocide, the defence pointed out that the mere participation of the defendants, in their capacities at the time, in the Politburo sessions of December 17 and 22, 1989 when no measure of repression against the events in Timisoara, Bucharest and other towns had been submitted for approval, could not be considered as grounds to support the accusation. The defence also recalled that during the December 17 meeting the defendants had no sufficient information to give them an accurate picture of the mass actions in Timisoara, while, in the report made by Ceausescu on the occasion everything seemed the work of hooligans supported by hostile foreign forces in an attempt to destabilize the country, violate its sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity. In that light, the measures meant to restore order decided by Ceausescu prior to the meeting, in his capacity as secretary general of the party, head of state and supreme commander of the Army, had seemed nothing but legitimate and well justified. With regard to the meeting of December 22, 1989, a time when it had become obvious that the people's peaceful demonstration was against the dictatorship, the defence said that the so-called commitment expressed by the Politburo members on that occasion to fight to the end for Ceausescu's regime had resulted in no order or measure on their part. After Ceausescu's flight, they had instead adopted a passive attitude, which excluded any cause-effect relation between their own actions and the effects of the revolution repression.

Moreover, according to the defence, there is no relation of determination either in case the charge is changed to that of instigation to aggravated murder against one or more persons and, therefore, a request for acquittal was made also for that case, the defendants being considered not guilty of that crime.

Groups Call Moldova Referendum 'Immoral'

AU1903174891 Bucharest DREPTATEA in Romanian 13 Mar 91 p 1

["Declaration of Political Parties of Romania, Organizations, Associations, and Trade Unions Signatories of This Declaration in Connection With the Intention of the USSR To Organize a Referendum in the Republic of Moldova on 17 March 1991"; place and date not given]

[Text] In connection with the planned reorganization of the structures of the Soviet state with the aim of legalizing the preservation of the Republic of Moldova within the USSR—in the light of historic and national rights—the Romanian public has learned with indignation about the USSR's decision to organize a referendum in the sovereign Republic of Moldova whose territory was occupied and annexed by the USSR in 1940.

In connection with this situation, we note the following:

1. The territory within the Republic of Moldova today, as well as other territories, have been annexed from Romania. Part of them constitute the territory of the Republic of Moldova, while others (North Bukovina, the counties in the north and south of Bessarabia, and Hertza district) were illegally given to the Ukraine.

The territories taken away from Romania were occupied and incorporated into the USSR in 1940 in violation of the international law in force both then and now.

The basis of the occupation of that territory was the provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact concluded on 23 August 1939 between Hitler and Stalin.

International law prohibits the organization of a referendum by the occupying power.

2. The Republic of Moldova proclaimed its sovereignty, something that means that the supreme power in that state is its exclusive prerogative. The organization of a referendum by another power from outside is at variance with the norms of international law.

3. The Republic of Moldova has specifically expressed its desire not to accept said referendum on its territory. The legal and democratically elected legislature has voted against the organization of such a referendum in the Republic of Moldova.

4. Bearing in mind that for half a century an inhuman process of nationalization, deportation, and colonization took place, to impose today's referendum is not only illegal, but also profoundly immoral.

5. The Republic of Moldova has no endorsed law in connection with this referendum.

6. The democratization process of the political and economic activity in East European countries, including the Republic of Moldova, are natural and objective developments, which should not be prevented for reasons generated by an outdated mentality of domination that has been condemned by history.

7. The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact has been condemned by all states in the world, especially by the Western countries, and it was even canceled by the Soviet Union at the Second Congress of the People's Deputies of the USSR in December 1989.

It goes without saying that all the consequences of this Pact have to be eliminated as well.

The Republics of Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are sovereign and independent states.

8. The UN Charter and the documents of the Helsinki Final Act on Cooperation and Security in Europe solemnly recognize peoples' right to being their own masters.

No people can be kept against their will within a multinational state formation into which they were incorporated by force.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned things, the political parties in Romania, organizations, associations, and trade unions signatories to the present declaration appeal to the USSR leadership and demand the cancellation of the decision to hold a referendum in the Republic of Moldova, a country that has spoken out against such a referendum. By the same token, they solemnly declare that the referendum organized through nonobservance of laws and international ethics is and will be viewed null and void from the very beginning and without having any valid consequences for the political sphere.

National Peasant Christian Democratic Party
National Liberal Party
Social-Democratic Party
Alliance for Democracy
Pro-Bessarabia and Bukovina Association
Romanian People's Front—Bucharest Branch
C.A.D.A. [Action Committee for the Democratization of the Army]
Christian-Democratic Union
"Fraternitatea" Political Trade Union
Pro-Balticum Romanian League
League for Justice
Free Republican Party
Monarchist Liberal Party of Romania
Party for Honoring the Heroes of the Revolution and National Salvation
Romanian National Party
Christian Democratic Revolution Party
Democratic Unity Party
People's Party of Romania
Review FLACARA BASARABIEI [Bessarabian Flame]
Bucharest-Chisinau [Kishinev] Cultural Society
International Christian Solidarity, Romania Branch
University Solidarity
Union for Territorial Completion of Romania
Union of Romanians Everywhere
Bureau of the Antitotalitarian Democratic Forum of Romania, which unanimously support this declaration.

We invite the other parties that were not able to attend our meeting to express their opinion in a party declaration to establish a common position in connection with this referendum.

Prime Minister Roman Sums Up Visit to Ecuador

AU1903162991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1512 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Bucharest ROMPRES 19/3/1991—In an interview granted exclusively to the national news agency ROMPRES, Prime Minsiter Petre Roman assessed that "from the point of view of political and human contacts" his visit to Ecuador "was something special and unexpected." "We agreed to initiate a number of wide-scope ventures, industrial projects, in oil and mining, animal breeding and forestry," the Romanian premier said laying stress on the importance of increasing commercial exchanges between Ecuadorian and Romanian entrepreneurs in domains of joint interest. The question is to be able to arouse the interest of Romanian enterprises and find technical modalities and resources to export more to that country. There are great possibilities, the Ecuadorian party showing interest in all kinds of vehicles (tractors, lorries, buses) as well as in using the Romanian fishing fleet and in building fishing vessels in Romania. Likewise, Premier Roman showed that agreement was reached on Romania's participation in the building of hydropower plants, irrigation systems in Ecuador. Cultural and educational agreements were also covenanted.

The Romanian prime minsiter pointed to the importance of the visit to Ecuador from a diplomatic point of view.

In his interview Prime Minister Roman assessed his political contacts with Ecuadorian officials as "excellent." I had useful talks with the president of the republic, he said pointing to the similitude of viewpoints as far as politics is concerned.

In conclusion Mr. Roman mentioned that he conveyed President Borja President Iliescu's invitation to visit Romania.

Roman on Latin American, European Relations

PY1603212091 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 3 Mar 91 pp D8, D9

["Exclusive" interview with Prime Minister Petre Roman by Julio Cesar Saavedra in Bucharest—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Saavedra] Why will you visit Chile?

[Roman] This trip responds to the mutual Romanian-Chilean interest in developing relations and is being made because Romania is very interested in strengthening its relations with Latin America. We began with visits to Colombia, Uruguay, and Argentina. We are now going to visit Chile, Ecuador, and Brazil. President Ion Iliescu also has trips to Mexico, Venezuela, and Costa Rica scheduled for the second half of the year. It is a program to open up to the Latin world of the Americas. We also believe that Romania can be a bridge between Latin America and Europe. [passage omitted]

[Saavedra] How do you evaluate the Romanian position within the structure of European security and its aspirations to become a member of European institutions?

[Roman] The fact that we are associated with the European Council, with a system of common democratic values, is very important to carrying out the Romanian democratization process. It is clear that we have to make progress as fast as possible toward the status of member of the European Council. Romania already asked to be admitted to that organization.

[Saavedra] How do you see your possibilities there?

[Roman] It is possible; it is something that already began.

[Saavedra] What do you think of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact?

[Roman] The Warsaw Pact disappeared as a military structure. It remains to be seen what formulas can be kept in the purely political field to prevent a vacuum in this part of Europe. We are thinking about a system of bilateral pacts to ensure regional stability and security.

[Saavedra] How do you evaluate the situation in the neighboring countries— Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and especially Moldova (this republic stated its desire to become a part of Romania)?

[Roman] The situations in those countries are undoubtedly a threat. The Romanian position is quite clear. We are convinced that the stability of Yugoslavia and Moldova are important. This is essential. We do as much as we can to support that stability. But it has to be built on the basis of the European process. It is necessary to give form to a stable regional situation. We are working on it: in the Black Sea region, in the Balkans, and in the area we call the Danube. We are trying to build this regional security through bilateral treaties and meetings among the countries of the region. We are making efforts to establish relations for example with the group made up of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary on one side, and the five-country group [Pentagonal] on the other side. Of course we are making this effort within the framework of the European integration process.

[Saavedra] Can we say then that Romania's ultimate goal is eventually to become an EEC member?

[Roman] Certainly.

[Saavedra] What is your position on Moscow's attitude toward the Baltic countries?

[Roman] We already conveyed our position: The presence of Soviet troops in the Baltic countries is clearly negative. It is a step backward in the Soviet perestroyka, which in the economic aspect has achieved practically nothing. It is clear that to keep a country on the basis of a military force no longer makes any sense.

[Saavedra] What is your opinion of the changes taking place in the Soviet Union in this regard?

[Roman] It is a delicate situation. The only solid basis for the establishment of a normal situation would be the recognition of the local powers of the republics which make up the USSR.

Roman Interviewed on 'Current Political Process'

AU1503115191 Bucharest AZI in Romanian 9 Mar 91 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Prime Minister Petre Roman with Quito's HOY; place and date not given: "Against Ideological Dogmas"]

[Text] [HOY] What does the current political process in Romania consist of compared to other countries in Eastern Europe that have also begun to democratize their political systems?

[Roman] First, I have to point out that what we are doing in Romania today is part and parcel of a much broader process that is taking place in almost all Eastern countries. The way this process is taking place in Romania is determined by the specific conditions in which we began the democratization of our society. In this sense, I can say that the Romanian revolution was a unique social movement at the end of the 20th century. It broke with all ideological dogmas. This fact is confirmed even by the way in which the December 1989 revolution took shape as a result of a spontaneous mass outburst. The tight knot of social tension, moral despair, and the material and moral humiliation of a nation—suffering under the most terrible dictatorial system directed against the individual and constrained by an ideology that had used up its resources for a collectivist utopia—constituted the preconditions for the outbreak of the revolution, but also the precarious foundation on which we started to implement our social and economic reform. Another characteristic of our revolution was the

violent way in which it unfolded, because of the persistence with which the former power structure tried to quench our struggle for democracy. The tremendous price paid by our people to free themselves from Ceausescu's dictatorship and terror from the very beginning made it clear to us what road we should take.

The totalitarian nature of the communist power based on the existence of an extremely strong and effective repressive apparatus made the organization of opposition forces impossible in Ceausescu's Romania. As a result, immediately after the revolution, the problem of setting up a legitimate and representative force to assume responsibility for the democratization process was difficult. The very way in which this problem was solved right in the first hours of the revolution—by setting up the National Salvation Front [FSN], which regrouped people from various walks of life but with the same democratic ideals—was one of the original aspects characterizing the reform in Romania. Certainly, the situation of the economy, which we inherited from the former regime, as well as the social structure and the state of the nation's spirit brought about certain economic and social tensions that contributed to the increased intricacy in which we have been carrying out the major part of the reconstruction of Romanian society so far. The analysis I have made of Romania's special conditions made us decide to focus on the strategy of proceeding toward the market economy in our reform program as the only guarantee for overcoming the crisis through which we are passing. A characteristic feature of this process is the fact that we decided to go through the transition stages at a dynamic rate because it is the only way—we believed—to reduce the social costs of the reform to the minimum. This rate, which has generally surpassed that of other Eastern European countries, explains the fact that today we are almost at the same transition level as Poland and Hungary, which proceeded to a gradual transition many years before us.

[HOY] From a political and ideological point of view, how would you characterize the FSN and, in your opinion, what role will it play as a political organization in building the new political system in your country?

[Roman] As I have said, the FSN was born during the revolution; it is the result of the spontaneous unification of forces characterized by very different social bases that joined the revolution with a number of common ideals. We may say that from both a structural and ideological point of view, the setting up of the Front as a party is still an open process. Nonetheless, the victory of this organization in the elections was a very clear victory, and this was due to the confidence the electorate had in the Front's political ability as a result of the very firm way in which it implemented its statements ("the 10 points") of the first communique to the country drawn up in the very evening of 22 December 1989.

Its success in the elections was determined by the clear option of orienting our policy toward a subtle and modern social-democratic doctrine. At this point, the FSN is and will remain the most powerful modern and democratic leftist party. We are part of the movement of the "enlightened left" as it exists in the Western European countries, which developed—not accidentally—in the Latin countries with which we obviously have very close cultural and emotional links. The rise experienced by social-democracy today in very varied developed states—such as the Scandinavian countries, but also Germany and Austria—strengthens our option.

The FSN is currently struggling, as it did when it was born, for liberty and justice in the broadest sense of the words. These two major aims are still in the process of being achieved through reform and democracy. It is on the basis of this position that we have assumed the role of initiators of the process of building the new political and economic system in Romania; we are aware that it is not and will not be an easy process, but we believe that we would be held accountable not only by the present, but also by history, were we to deviate from this road.

Certainly, the reconstruction of Romanian society is not only our work; it is the joint effort of the whole nation—that is, of the other political forces as well. Unfortunately, our progress is still being hampered by great obstacles from groups that have a feeling of nostalgia for the privileges they had in the communist period and from the opposition, which frequently acts in an obstructionist way and is tempted to put the interests of the group before the interests of society. We are aware of the fact that difficulties that crop up on the road of reform can generate doubt and opposition even among our supporters; therefore, we believe that the Front is also obligated to ensure a total openness about the ways of reconstructing our society, thus making each citizen's way of approaching it natural and determined by the correct understanding of the reform's objectives, by its stage of implementation, and by its advantages—not only the disadvantages that might occur after the implementation of the reform.

[HOY] What are the major political, economic, and social problems faced by the democratic process in Romania during this period when the FSN is in power?

[Roman] It is difficult to define the complex nature of the whole democratization process in Romania in a few words. There are many problems that have a structural nature while other problems have a conjunctural nature. We must approach all problems practically and simultaneously. Theoretically, we could mention some of the aspects of this process, which I believe is unique in history. We know that currently Romanian society is going through a restructuring process. I call it restructuring, which, as a matter of fact, is also a process of renewal. This means that on the one hand, the traditional structures—which were destroyed by the appearance of imported communism in the postwar period—are being renewed, and, on the other hand, new structures are being created in accordance with the modern ways and the current state of society in general and of European society in particular. As far as the

renewing of the traditional structures is concerned, I believe that the most remarkable step is to renew the one referring to the land and later we will also take steps toward the right to ownership for all social categories. We call it a decisive step because the society and the whole economic establishment can function only within a well-established structure regarding ownership, which is coordinated with the social structure and with the national economy. Now we have reached the stage when we have to change the old—very outdated—structure of the socialist economy and begin developing a new one. From the point view of the social structure, we have already taken one—the most important—step; that is, we succeeded in completely destroying the old communist totalitarian structures.

Today, we are fully in the process of establishing democratic structures. We believe that in this respect, the moment of adopting a new constitution will mark the irrevocable passage to a new democratic society in the most genuine sense of the word.

The greatest political, economic, and social problems we are going to encounter will be primarily generated by the scope and the depth with which the reform and democratization process is carried out because we will have to carry out this process without permitting any major imbalance in society. That is why we, from a political point of view, chose the road that leads to democracy, while, at the same time, we are ensuring a satisfactory level of social security for all the social categories that are most exposed to risks. As a matter of fact, this is the point at which we differ most from liberalism: We believe that a market economy is a necessary condition of democracy, but not a sufficient one. We believe that our success on the road of establishing democracy depends on the combination of the two processes: to ensure an increasingly greater freedom for the individual and to ensure a balanced framework for the economic, political, and social process.

[HOY] What role will the Eastern European countries play in the "new order" that will be the result of the most recent international events and the Gulf war?

[Roman] The Eastern European countries have been and continue to be strongly affected by the Gulf war, particularly as a result of the narrowing possibilities for oil supply and of the halt to an important number of cooperation projects with the countries in that region. So far, Romania alone has registered losses that amount to more that $3.2 billion, and is recognized by the specialized body of the UN Security Council —the "661 Committee"—as one of the countries that have been most affected on an economic plane.

In spite of all the great losses that we have suffered—in addition to the inherent difficulties of the transition period toward the market economy—as early as the first day of Kuwait's occupation by Iraq, Romania spoke out and acted for the restoration of legality and the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from this country. In its capacity as a UN Security Council member and president of the Council in August 1990, we actually participated in drafting all this body's resolutions regarding the conflict, we voted for them, and scrupulously observed them—I am referring in particular to the resolution on the economic embargo. In addition to all this, motivated by humanitarian reasons, we sent noncombatant military units (a field hospital and an anti-chemical protection unit) to that region.

Consequently, we clearly sided with the forces of the international coalition that took action to implement the Security Council resolutions, and we welcomed the results attained.

We further intend to actively participate in the efforts taken by the international community to normalize the situation in the area and to bring stability and security to that part of the world. Likewise, once the political and military situation is normalized, we would like to resume economic ties with all countries in the area, so Romanian companies can participate in the implementation of the reconstruction and development projects that will be initiated.

In a broader sense, we are determined to participate in the creation of a system that would make impossible a repetition of events like the forceful occupation of the territory of a state by another state, regardless of pretexts or motivations.

I cannot speak on behalf of the other states in our part of the world, but I assume that their leaderships have similar interests and orientations.

[Hoy] What are Romania's prospects regarding the EEC? Is the relationship one of dependence or cooperation?

[Roman] Romania's relations with the EEC are of cardinal importance to our country, which is fully in the process of drawing closer to the Western European political and economic mechanism, as part of the basic political choice of reintegration in Europe, which we opted for after the overthrow of the dictatorship. Of course, we aim to develop relations of cooperation and this is the meaning of the agreement on trade and commercial and economic cooperation between Romania and the EEC, signed last October and recently ratified by both sides. Likewise, in the near future we want to negotiate an association agreement—belonging to the "third generation" of such EEC agreements—similar to those proposed by the European Community to other Eastern European countries.

Of course, our final objective is to join the Common Market, but we realize that this is a longer process in view of the trends within the Community and the fact that countries such as Austria, Turkey, Cyprus, Sweden, and so forth are already on the "waiting list."

Anyway, by drawing closer to the consolidated structures of the Common Market, we want to integrate ourselves in it, on the basis of the principles that lie at the

foundation of relations among the EEC member countries, and we are ready to adjust our legislation to the Community's legislation, which is a sine qua non condition for adherence to its bodies. I do not believe, however, that one can raise here the issue of relations of dependence but rather of instruments for our country's adjustment, as a first part of the process of our association with the EEC.

[HOY] Mr. Prime Minister, do you still believe in the validity of a socialist economic and social model, or has capitalism definitively emerged victorious in the world?

[Roman] Your question is charged with strong theoretical innuendoes; consequently, it cannot be given a peremptory answer, particularly because it deals with notions that, in my opinion, should be defined or redefined, beginning with the one referring to the "socialist economic and social model." I prefer to limit myself to reducing the question from its universal dimension to what happened and is happening in Romania.

As you know, under the label of so-called "scientific socialism," we experienced the harshest dictatorship ever known in the country's modern history. In the final phase of this dictatorship, an absolute mass pauperization of the of nearly the entire population has been reached. It is true that a structural crisis was unfolding on a world scale; however, if the advanced market economies replied by embarking on a process of revolutionary adjustment, by developing new technologies at a faster rate, the centrally planned economies replied through a reflex of preservation of those very anachronistic productions. In our country, the crisis encompassed all coordination arteries and centers of the national economy, up to the sclerosis of the entire social body and the abandonment of economic rationality. All that the socialist structures themselves did was to favor this stagnation, because the economic, financial, social, political, ideological, and administrative command levers are able to "postpone" the solving of pending problems, to turn the illness into a chronic one, and thus to deepen the crisis.

The revolution has inaugurated some profound structural changes. We are irreversibly engaged along the road of promoting the recognized values of the institutionalized democracy: political pluralism, tolerance, human rights, private property envisaged and protected by law, free initiative, free competition, free access to mass media, freedom of consciousness, and the democratic rights of various groups to cultural, religious, and ethnic identity. The reform—which we conceived and are promoting, and whose core is the transition to the market economy—is impossible outside the framework of democracy.

In short, the double word "socialist-capitalism" in Romania's specific conditions is translated into "dictatorship-democracy." The clear winner is: democracy.

Federal Army Wants More Money Printed

AU1903114791 Zagreb VECERNJI LIST in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 91 p 3

[S. Nikasinovic report]

[Text] Belgrade—As we have learned from reliable sources, as well as having obtained the original document concerning it, the Secretariat for National Defense [SSNO] has demanded that the SFRY Presidency adopt special measures because of the financial problems caused by the cessation of payments to the federal budget. It is stated in the draft law that the Yugoslav People's Army [JNA] has submitted to the SFRY Presidency, and which should be adopted by the Chamber of Republics and Provinces of the SFRY Assembly, that "the legal grounds for this are to be found in Article 279, Paragraph 6 of the SFRY Constitution, where it is stated that, to meet national defense needs caused by extraordinary circumstances, the SFRY Assembly can independently establish sources of income to meet these needs if they cannot be met from the federal budget or from the budgetary federal reserves."

According to the draft law, "the money would be provided from the primary issue"—that is by printing fresh money that would be delivered every month and not later than three days after the end of the month.

If the SFRY Presidency adopts this proposal by the SSNO, it would mean printing huge amounts of money that the JNA needs. A major question is how such a decision would effect our relations with the International Monetary Fund and foreign financiers, because such a decision, to a great extent, would undermine the Federal Executive Council's stabilization program. There is no doubt the JNA is facing a lack of money, but such a solution would above all represent the complete ruin of the government's program.

Kucan, Tudjman Propose Presidents' Meeting

LD1903152591 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1357 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Ljubljana, March 19 (TANJUG)—The presidents of Slovenia and Croatia, Milan Kucan and Franjo Tudjman, sent a joint letter to the presidents of the other Yugoslav republics, i.e. their presidencies, proposing a meeting of the presidents, i.e. presidencies, of all republics.

Kucan and Tudjman propose that the meeting also be attended by the Yugoslav State Presidency, i.e. its representative, together with the Federal Assembly president and prime minister.

The two presidents called for the meeting to be held in Zagreb on March 21, but said they are willing to consider another venue "if favourable conditioms for this exist."

An official statement by the Slovenian Presidency says that Presidents Kucan and Tudjman believe that, in the situation created by the resignation of State Presidency President Borisav Jovic and after recent a statement by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, a democratic solution to the political and state crisis demands a meeting of the top leaderships of the sovereign republics.

The Croatian president's office issued a statement saying that "the initiative has already been accepted by the presidents of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia, Alija Izetbegovic and Kiro Gligorov, while an invitation by telephone has been sent to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic."

The statement underscored that "in this dramatic political situation it is not possible to question the legitimacy of work of those top republican leaders and State Presidency members who are engaged on the new talks on the organization of a future community or alliance."

In future talks, the statement says, the leaderships of the republics should reach an agreement on the economic, political, defence and foreign relations between the sovereign republics, as well as the minimum functions of a future Yugoslav community.

Markovic Wants Crisis Resolution, Reorganization

LD2003150991 Zagreb Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] The Federal Executive Council [FEC] is urging the SFRY Presidency to continue talks on resolving the crisis and reorganizing the country so representatives of all federal units, the SFRY Assembly, and the FEC will participate.

This was stated today by [FEC] President Ante Markovic at the SFRY Assembly Federal Chamber session. He called on delegates to the federal legislature to take over responsibility for the future of Yugoslavia and demanded that discussions on the future of Yugoslavia be transferred to the Assembly.

Federal Chamber Fails To Agree on Agenda

LD2003100191 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0915 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade, 20 Mar (TANJUG)—Delegates to the SFRY Assembly Federal Chamber session did not establish the agenda for today, even after discussing it for an hour. A number of delegates demanded that the current political situation in the country, created by SFRY Presidency President Borisav Jovic and two Presidency members' resignations, be examined because it was not previously on the agenda.

The chamber adopted a proposal by delegate Hisen Ramadani that representatives of the Federal Executive Council should inform the chamber today on how federal bodies are functioning in the newly created situation

and whether conditions have been created for the continuation of negotiations on the new organization of Yugoslavia.

Army Opposed To Solving Crisis With Force

LD2003150491 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1300 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Maribor, March 20 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav People's Army is opposed to a solution of the Yugoslav crisis through the use of force, and recently in Pakrac (Yugoslav Republic of Croatia) Army units prevented a conflict between the two opposing sides, General Konrad Kolsek, commander of the Fifth Army District which includes Slovenia and a part of Croatia, has said in an interview to Maribor [words indistinct].

The Yugoslav Army never dictated any political talks in the country. It must abide by the federal Constitution, because the deployment of the Armed Forces could result in anarchy, said General Kolsek, commander of the Armed Forces in the two republics, which urge a confederation in Yugoslavia.

The Army is caught up between two fires—some are calling it an occupier, while others are trying to involve it in their political games. Unfortunately, emotions often prevail over reason, and even the Army has difficulties to remain aside, the general said.

However, the Army will not allow a civil war and a conflict between the Yugoslav nations, as almost happened in Pakrac when the Serb population recently clashed with the Croatian police.

Asked to comment on the Slovenian parliament's decision to stop sending conscripts to the Yugoslav Army, General Kolsek said that, with all appreciation for the Slovenian parliament (he is a Slovenian), he considers the decision to be "rash."

Both the territorial defence and the internal affairs administration do not have even the elementary conditions to train the conscripts for the Army, General Kolsek said.

Different political and social processes are under way in Europe, Europe is warning us, and it is good that it exists, as it clearly has more political wisdom, imbued with rich experience and a wish for peace, concluded General Kolsek.

Serbian President Milosevic's Political Views

LD1903204891 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1406 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Report on talks held between Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Belgrade University students and professors in Belgrade on 19 March]

[Excerpts] Belgrade, 19 Mar (TANJUG)—The stand of Serbia from the very beginning has been that the future of Yugoslavia should be decided by nations, not by leaderships, because leaderships created Yugoslavia neither in 1918 nor in 1943. We are for the peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav crisis and for respect of the will of all Yugoslav nations, but we are against the policy of fait accompli and illegal armament.

The talks, which were held in the office of the Belgrade University vice chancellor, were attended by the university leadership headed by Deputy Vice Chancelor Rajko Vracar, the leaders of the Alliance of Belgrade Students, deans of Belgrade faculties, representatives of Belgrade student organizations, and delegates to the university assembly.

It is not our intention to prevent the Croats or any other nation from leaving Yugoslavia, but we are not going to allow anybody to drag the Serbs out with them, against their own will. The proposed document on secession sets out that we are clearly for the respect of the right to self-determination including secession, but this should be equally applied to all Yugoslav nations. As all other nations, the Serbs should also decide in a referendum whether they want a Yugoslavia or not. If the Serbs in Croatia decide in a referendum that they wish to live in Croatia outside Yugoslavia, we are not going to oppose that. We are resolved to respect all human civil rights of all Yugoslav citizens, Milosevic said.

There is no democracy or multiparty system if individual parties are arming themselves with Kalishnikovs while others rely on their political program. Borisav Jovic told the [SFRY] Presidency members that none of the decisions to enhance the Army's combat-readiness or the decisions concerning the disarming of paramilitary formations would be considered valid providing the weapons are handed over within 48 hours. This, however, was not accepted.

What else could we do in that case? I informed the [SFRY] Presidency members that if the paramilitary formations in Croatia are not disarmed, we shall not arm the Serbs illegally but quite legally because we have no right to wait to see defenseless people experience once again the same fate that befell it so tragically, because the experience of the time of the independent state of Croatia was so bitter.

I advocate yet another attempt to find peaceful solutions to the crisis. This is the spirit of our platform, because our demands threaten no one, no other nation, but they are designed to defend the Serbian nation.

I am proud that there are no interethnic conflicts in Serbia except in Kosovo where they have been provoked by separatists. When did an Albanian in Belgrade—and there are about 80,000 of them of all professions living in the capital—have an unpleasant experience? Milosevic asked.

Speaking about the Yugoslav Presidency document outlining the functions of a common state of the Yugoslav people, Milosevic stressed that there could be no

common state without a common defense policy, common foreign affairs and a single market, in other words, a common monetary and fiscal policy and foreign economic relations.

Nationalism and discrimination belong to the middle ages. The future must be built on the basis of the policy of national equality and nothing else. Serbia is strongly in favor of this and of peace since no one wants to die, Slobodan Milosevic said.

Slobodan Milosevic, who spoke without a script, then asked the professors and students to take part in an open discussion, "without hesitation."

Milosevic was applauded.

The real national interest of Serbia is democracy, and you, Mr. President, did not secure that. You are held responsible for what Belgrade TV and POLITIKA are doing, you are held responsible for the police intervention on 9 March. You made a mistake, and you should admit that. It will not hurt your dignity if you do that; Serbia will not be any weaker if you resign, it will be stronger, Nebojsa Milikic, a student of the mining and geological faculty, said.

POLITIKA and Belgrade TV are "more dangerous than 20 nuclear bombs." It is a shame that the opposition representatives were lablelled as Albanian separatists in the Serbian Assembly; it is not correct that you sought support from Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina for what you did on 9 March, and in the end 1968 is being repeated. You made promises but you are continuing with the old practice.

Apologize to the Serbian people, you will do a great thing for Serbian history, Milikic said, thunderously applauded by students.

Milosevic replied that it is inappropriate for him to be compared with the president who gave his support and promises to students in 1968. I made you no promises, I did not fawn over you, nor shall I do that, nor shall I tell you that you are right if you are not. It is not true that I sought support from the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina.

I do not think that Serbia depends on one person, because if it were so, it would be a tragedy. It is impossible to allow anarchy and bloodshed, because that is not democracy, and all questions have to be resolved in the legislature. If some laws are not good, the legislature is the place to correct them, to adopt new ones. When the Red Brigades kidnapped Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro about 20 years ago [as received], conditioning his release on the release of their 11 terrorists, the Italian Government did not give in and replied that this would have been anarchy.

It is impossible to work democratically in a constant atmosphere of pressure, Milosevic said, and added that he himself urged in a talk with opposition party leaders that one Belgrade TV channel should be nonparty to aviod wasting money for setting up a special TV channel.

Professor of the faculty of mathematics and science Budimir Tatic said the president should be praised for his proposal on live coverage of the Serbian Assembly session, but he also criticized deputies, particularly members of the Socialist Party of Serbia, who keep saying that democracy should be implemented gradually, while they disregard the fact that Serbia was democratic before the [Second World] War. He said that he likes Dragoljub Micunovic's urging that the future of Yugoslavia cannot be discussed by only eight leaders, and that a Yugoslav-wide referendum should be called.

Asked what would happen with parts of other nations living in Serbia in the event of a referendum, Milosevic replied that the right to self-determination, including secession, should be equally shared by all. He again emphasized that he thinks that the survival of Yugoslavia is an interest of all Yugoslav nations and that it is in line with integrational processes in Europe.

Vlastimir Vidic, a student of the faculty of politics asked why the SFRY Presidency did not react immediately, much stronger, when it learned about the arming. He added that some politicians around the president are destroying his reputation. He said that deputies Dusan Matkovic and Zivorad Igic have lost much confidence after their statement on the student demonstrations.

Speaking about the SFRY Presidency attitude toward the illegal arming in Croatia, Milosevic stressed that it is the stumbling block. Information on this dangerous act only resulted in the adoption of a decision in principle to disarm the legislative formations, but this was just pulling wool over our eyes, because no subsequent decision enabled the Army to implement this decision. Jovic understood that it was an obstruction and wanted no part in it, Milosevic replied. Asked why the Army did not confiscate the weapons immediately, Milosevic replied that it did not do it because it had not been previously ordered by the SFRY Presidency to do so.

Milosevic explained that it is not within the Army's competence to control border crossings, but only to safeguard the country's borders.

Asked why he did not come to Terazije, Milosevic said that when he received the student delegation no one informed him that his presence was asked for. He stressed that he is prepared to talk with students at any time and at any place, and that he saw no reason why he would not have come to Terazije, because he had attended several such gatherings.

Asked why the police waited for students at the Sava bridge, Milosevic stressed that public peace and order is not within the direct competence of the republican president. I could tell you that at the moment when the internal affairs minister, whose resignation you demanded, learned that you were on the bridge, he

ordered that the students be let through to Terazije. We have nothing against peaceful student demonstrations.

Explaining, at the demand of his questioners, why the police reserve force has been mobilized, Milosevic said that emergency measures are out of the question, but the aim of the mobilization is to secure normal work for all citizens. We ordered the mobilization after a police patrol was ambushed in Kosovo by Albanian terrorists and separatists. We have also received information from the Sandzak region that a three-man group has been formed there to attack the police station in Novi Pazar. The mobilization of the police reserve force is just a preventive measure.

I will defend the democratic development of Serbia and will act consistently and make decisions on the basis of the democratic principles of the Serbian constitution. I will not defend the post of the republican president by force, Milosevic replied to a question on whether he would resign.

He agreed that there have been demands for his resignation, but said that many are asking him to take over powers and measures in line with the constitution and laws. I shall do what the citizens of Serbia demand from me, Milosevic said. [passage omitted]

"I cannot be led either by Skundric or Micunovic of Vuk," said Aleksandar Nikacevic, chairman of the student union, adding that he believed the students had been caught between "the temerity of the opposition and the obstinancy of the authorities." He said that in his view Radmilo Bogdanovic had completed his ministerial role, and then he addressed Slobodan Milosevic as follows:

"Please, president, I will be the first one to stand by you if in a few days time you resolutely state that you recognize all the parties equally." He also asked for a free area to be established for direct communication between the cultural public and themselves.

Slobodan Milosevic replied that "he does not discharge his office and will not discharge it on behalf of any political party or part of Serbia, because if he were to discriminate he would not do his job honorably". He added: "The same yardstick should apply for everyone, for the benefit of Serbia and of the Serbian people, in a way our common sense can insure."

Student Aleksander Djordjevic found it necessary to publicly dissociate himself from the press headline "Slobodan Milosevic is [the] Epitomy of Sacredness," saying that he has no personal sacred things, because in Terazije Square he did not fear tanks, knowing that no future awaits him: a future without a job, without a family. He vigorously criticized the ruling party and elections, and asked the president whether he knows that communism was dead.

"All replies to key questions can be found in the Serbian constitution. Regarding elections, they were free," Milosevic said, stressing that he is not convinced that citizens are not aware of what is going on around them.

One of the questions on the Kosovo problem referred to those Albanian workers who left their jobs and now want to return to their work places.

"Albanians who abandoned their workplaces because they do not recognize the Republic of Serbia and its laws have no right to ask to return to work, but all others, who remained jobless for different reasons, will be treated honestly and equally."

Dean of the faculty of dental medicine Dragan Kuburovic asked why Milosevic does not travel abroad, to which Milosevic replid that the main reason is that he is preoccupied with internal problems. In this connection Milosevic announced his visit to Greece. [passage omitted].

Senior Inspector Momcilo Stojanovic, the commander of the militia unit that was waiting for the students on Branko's bridge, also took part in the meeting today. He said that "no one issued the order to beat the students." Stojanovic gave a detailed account of the events leading up to the use of the tear gas. He claimed that tear gas was not directed at the students; his unit, he said, was surrounded, having previously been attacked by a group which, he said, was not a student group. In that situation Stojanovic was compelled "to defend his people," as he put it, insisting all the time that "no force must be used against the students." He said that during the incident his official car was wrecked, but he also expressed his intense regret that some students were injured at the time. Several students, witnesses of the same event, replied to the inspector's testimony.

During the meeting Slobodan Milosevic stressed that he will see to it that a commission of enquiry establishes all the facts, to shed light on the "meeting" between the students and the police on Branko's bridge.

Having noted that "because they were attacked by someone else, the police should not have attacked the students," Mladen Djordjevic asked the president of the republic "why he did not simply order Mitevic and the other from Belgrade TV management singled out by the students to leave before 9 March?" He went on to state that the situation has not really improved because Belgrade TV alone failed to broadcast an appeal to him [Milosevic] to resign, made by a group of Serbian intellectuals. The TV reported neither a protest by POLITIKA journalists nor a denial by the mother of the girl Kristina. [as received]

Djordjevic also asked the president to explain a part of his statement in which he referred to the situation in Sandzak, that is, "what does mobilization actually imply? Is it the deployment of the police through the back door?" He said that, as a Serb from Kosovo, he can testify that not all Serbs in Kosovo believe Slobodan Milosevic.

"Speaking man to man," Djordjevic said, "I must say that it is, unfortunately, under your rule that this nation has experienced its biggest massacre." He asked if not, Djordjevic said, then I suggest a government of national salvation be set up.

Milosevic replied that he had no right to make changes in Belgrade TV, and as far as Sandzak is concerned he insisted that it is his duty to ensure security in both Sandzak and in Kosovo. He went on to describe an incident in which a militia patrol was showered with bullets, and added that according to reports at his disposal groups of three are being formed in Sandzak to carry out attacks on the police station in Novi Pazar.

"Regarding my promises that no one will be allowed to beat up the people, it still stands. Milosevic said that you should not identify this standpoint with violence, because the people must be protected from violence in a legitimate way." There will be no police administration or control of citizens. But we shall insist on a democratic way of making political decisions in the interests of us all. As for the claims denying the existence of democracy in Serbia, Milosevic responded by asking: "In any case, when did you see demonstrations against the authorities in Zagreb or Ljubljana?"

Insisting that he is not being required either to ingratiate himself with them or give in if they are not right, Milosevic passed on the message to the students and to everyone else who doubts what he says that he always speaks the truth, and should anyone prove the opposite he will not wait for constitutional procedure to take its course. Democracy in Serbia did not start the day before yesterday but many years ago, said Milosevic, pointing all the time to the Serbian leadership's intention that the solution of the Yugoslav crisis and the status of the Serbian people in other parts [of the country] must be sought along a democratic road and through dialogue.

Ljubisa Lazarevic, speaking as a faculty of law professor, remarked that "a law-governed state does not always display political wisdom," so he addressed an appeal to Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbian leadership that should the state find itself placed between "repression and democracy," Serbia will never allow repression to be resorted to.

This could have been the joint message of everyone taking part in the meeting between Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and over 200 Belgrade university students and teachers. The meeting went on for over three hours. As far as it is known, in terms of its frankness and thrust it has had no parallel since Slobodan Milosevic became Serbian Leader.

Serbia Favors 'Peaceful Resolution'

LD1903132891 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1228 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade, 19 Mar (TANJUG)—There is no democracy and no multiparty system if one party arms itself while others only have their political programs and political will, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic said today during talks with professors and students at Belgrade University.

President Milosevic emphasized that Serbia supports the peaceful resolution of all problems in Yugoslavia, but those who illegally arm themselves are not for peace. I informed the SFRY Presidency members that if the paramilitary formations in Croatia are not disarmed, we shall not arm Serbs illegally but, rather, we shall arm them legally because we do not want to have unarmed people being placed at the mercy of armed members of the Croatian Democratic Community.

Jovic: Civil War Threat Precipitated Resignation

LD2003100591 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0938 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade, 20 Mar (TANJUG)—I made a decision to resign because recently a trend supporting anticonstitutional and illegal acts leading toward the disintegration of the country prevailed with the majority of the SFRY Presidency members. SFRY Presidency President Borisav Jovic said this at the beginning of his address to a session of the Serbian Assembly.

Such a policy of fait accompli puts some nations and republics in an unequal position, which can cause a civil war. I am not ready, Jovic emphasized, to accept such a policy, nor to be held responsible for it.

Assembly Discusses Resignation

LD2003143191 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1223 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade, March 20 (TANJUG)—Aleksandar Bakocevic, member of the Serbian parliament from the ruling Socialist Party (SPS) of Serbia, today proposed to this body to reject the resignation of Borisav Jovic to the post of State Presidency president.

The motion met with thunderous applause from the floor.

Bakocevic said that Jovic's retaining the post would open up prospects for continuing the ongoing reforms, parliamentary democracy, the process of pluralism of property and respect for human rights and freedoms.

In his view, it is in the interest of the citizens of Yugoslavia and Serbia to create conditions for continuing the quest for solutions on Yugoslavia's future.

Bakocevic also urged the holding of a nation-wide referendum on the country's future. In this way, he said, the citizens would bind their legitimate representatives to respect their will.

Democratic Party leader Dragoljub Micunovic said that Serbia should not permit itself to be left without representative on the country's presidency. "This would primarily threaten Serbs living in other republics—Croatia

and Bosnia-Herzegovina—because they would find themselves without federal protection", said Micunovic.

He criticized Jovic for failing to tender his resignation first to the Serbian parliament, which had elected him to the State Presidency. "Jovic's announcement of his resignation on television was premature", said Micunovic, "because it is farcical to submit a resignation only to withdraw it later".

"Serbia should not take on the burden of dismembering Yugoslavia. Let it be someone else who holds himself capable of doing so", he said, adding that it is not good to respond to obstruction by obstruction. "Instead, political imagination should be used for making a more serious contribution to the authority of the collective head of state", explained Micunovic.

He agreed with Jovic's assessment that the work of the State Presidency and other federal bodies had been blocked. "By failing to implement the decision on disarming paramilitary units, the Presidency has undermined both its own authority and that of the Yugoslav Army", concluded Micunovic.

Milan Paroski, member of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO), the biggest parliamentary opposition group, proposed that Serbian parliament President Slobodan Unkovic be elected to replace Jovic in the state presidency.

Paroski urged that the Yugoslav Presidency president calls federal multi-party elections immediately upon coming into office.

Paroski holds Jovic responsible for failing, as president of the country's collective head of state, to dissolve the federal parliament and the entire federal government because, he said, Prime Minister Ante Markovic has "carried out a coup."

Serbian Assembly To Cover Resignations, Protests

LD2003104291 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0945 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Belgrade, 20 Mar (TANJUG)—It appears that Borisav Jovic's resignation from the position of SFRY Presidency president and the election of a new member of the state presidency from Kosovo and Metohija will be central topics of the Serbian Assembly session that has just begun.

The agenda of the assembly session, which will last for several days, will also include, according to an announcement by Assembly President Slobodan Unkovic, a report by an inquiry committee on the demonstrations that took place on 9 March, as well as [Serbian Internal Affairs Minister] Radmilo Bogdanovic's resignation.

Serbian Opposition Leader Advocates Dialogue

LD1903120991 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1136 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Madrid, March 19 (TANJUG)—"Yugoslavia will survive," president of the Democratic Party and leader of the opposition group in the parliament of the biggest Yugoslav Republic of Serbia Dragoljub Micunovic says in an interview carried by the Spanish EL MUNDO today.

Micunovic says that democratic political dialogue might win the day in Yugoslavia against ethnic conflicts and that those who speak so lightly about secession and altering borders will soon learn how costly and dangerous it would be.

"In recent days, huge democratic potentials have been activated. We have shown that the opposition is not so small as it appears in parliament. Our influence on public opinion is enormous. In any case, the ratio of forces has changed," says Micunovic.

The leader of the Democratic Party and the opposition in the republican parliament urge democratic dialogue and parliamentary political struggle and believe that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic was forced to make concessions after last week's opposition and student demonstrations in Belgrade. He now faces confrontation and pressure which will unavoidably come from the workers, says Micunovic.

In answer to a question about the possibility of a military coup, Micunovic says that "this risk is not present at this time, although the threat still looms. We must prevent civil war. I believe that the Supreme Command of our Army wants to avoid a use of force."

Slovene President on Developments, Conflicts

AU1403112891 Vienna KURIER in German 14 Mar 91 p 5

["Exclusive" interview with Slovene President Milan Kucan by Hans Rauscher in Vienna; date not given: "Slovenia Has a Right to Sympathetic Consideration"]

[Text] [Rauscher] Mr. President, the imposition of martial law in Yugoslavia has just been averted. How dangerous is the situation after the unrest in Belgrade? What does the Federal Army want?

[Kucan] A very authoritarian state. This would put the Army in the foreground again as the factor of Yugoslav unity.

[Rauscher] Is an "insidious" Army putsch to be feared?

[Kucan] Yes, the trend is very clear. Obviously, the Army wants legal support by the commander in chief (the president of the SFRY Presidency, Jovic, a Serb—the editors).

[Rauscher] What should the West, what should Europe do?

[Kucan] Europe must examine whether its stand on Yugoslavia—namely the option of preserving Yugoslavia—is still justifiable. Because this option in particular has the lowest democratic support in Yugoslavia. Why should the Europeans or the Austrians want a unified Yugoslavia more than the Yugoslavs themselves?

[Rauscher] You have given up the last hope for a unified Yugoslavia?

[Kucan] Regarding Yugoslavia as it is now, yes, but not for a Yugoslavia in which the peoples form a new community after they have achieved their independence and sovereignty, for instance following the model of the EC with a single market as the basic element of integration.

[Rauscher] The key to a solution is Serbia. Do you think that there will be a change in Serbia, that the nationalist-communist regime of Slobodan Milosevic will be replaced? Could you talk better with his opponent, nationalist-conservative Vuk Draskovic?

[Kucan] Draskovic does not have any responsibility as of yet, but I think that he at least shows readiness to talk, while Milosevic only sets ultimatums.

Concerning Serbia: Serbia's problem is Serbia's position in Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, due to history Serbs also live in the other republics. For the Serbs this means either a centralist Yugoslavia that orients itself toward Serbia's policy, or a "Greater Serbian" state. For us the problem is totally different: either a centralist Yugoslavia, which we reject, or the sovereignty of the individual republics as national states. There, however, the Serbs, like all minorities, must be granted protection in line with international standards.

The Croatian state, too, must take into consideration the special position of the Serbs on its territory, which might even go as far as political autonomy.

[Rauscher] A magic date is 15 May. On this day a Croat is to replace the Serb Jovic as president of the SFRY Presidency. Will the Serbs permit that? If they do not, will Yugoslavia then not be blown to pieces?

[Kucan] This post being taken over by a Croat would mean that the Serbs can no longer simply use the federal mechanism, such as the supreme command over the Army. As a result, one must expect conflicts, which make the intervention of the Army seem acceptable.

[Rauscher] That would be done before 15 May?

[Kucan] This is also a possibility; therefore, it is necessary to pursue a very subtle policy to insist on political dialogue and to demand that the Army leave political life. For this we also need the help of the neighboring countries, because this is not just an internal affair of Yugoslavia; this might very quickly have consequences for all of Europe.

[Rauscher] Europe—the West—did not do anything with regard to the Baltic states. What could they do, if the Federal Army occupied Ljubljana or took over power in Croatia and fighting began?

[Kucan] The standpoint of the EC concerning Yugoslavia must be very clear—very clear concerning the use of the Army. It must be very clear, above all, that a change in the internal Yugoslav borders is not acceptable. It must be clear that the doors to European integration are closed if the future solution is something other than the result of agreements among the current republics.

[Rauscher] If negotiations do not achieve any solution, then Slovenia will constitute itself finally as an independent state.

[Kucan] Yes, either together with the others—whatever the form may be—or as an independent state.

[Rauscher] Would Slovenia be economically viable as an independent state?

[Kucan] One must ask the question differently, namely whether Slovenia can survive if it remains in Yugoslavia. My answer would be no, because with the current economic policy we are part of the completely unrealistic all-Yugoslav economic policy. After all, we are the strongest export factor.

Of course, we will have difficulties in the beginning, in particular if independence is achieved via a unilateral act, that is, without agreements or accords with the other republics. This would push us out of the international capital markets and the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, for a certain time. Then we will really need specific help in order to survive.

[Rauscher] Help through loans?

[Kucan] Help through loans or at least sympathetic consideration by the national banks of the European countries, so that Slovenia may continue to conduct normal international business. After everything that Slovenia has done for democratization in Yugoslavia, we think that we have a right to a certain sympathetic consideration.

[Rauscher] You mean, Slovenia keeps the Balkans away from Europe?

[Kucan] Not the Balkans, but violence, the conflicts between regions. I would prefer to say that Slovenia is counteracting a development in Yugoslavia that might lead in the direction of Lebanon. We are a factor of stability and democratic moderation. We have advocated a community among peoples, who do not have to be kept together by some ideology, some party, and the Army.

[Rauscher] What do you specifically expect from Austria in terms of informal help?

[Kucan] Austria must proceed from its own interests. Part of its interest remains objectively linked to the East. Austria is also interested in having Slovenia, and thus its southern border, remain stable. After all, 40 percent of Slovenia's trade is conducted with Austria. There is a long period of common history, which is not always very pleasant for us. But now we are facing each other as two democratic countries with open borders, where it is not possible at all to have a disturbing factor. [sentence as published] In particular if Article 7 of the Austrian State Treaty is being completely fulfilled.

[Rauscher] In which respect?

[Kucan] Where there is a Slovene minority there should be bilingual signposts indicating the name of the town and bilingual educational institutions, including kindergartens and high schools. This is not a disturbing factor but has an integrating effect. We have had the experience in Italy and Hungary that the more the majority oppresses the Slovenes, the greater resistance becomes. If there is no oppression, the Slovenes do not rebel; then the Slovenes look for their identity at another level, in the relationship with themselves.

Slovene Prime Minister Issues Draft Moratorium

LD2003151491 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1403 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Ljubljana, March 20 (TANJUG)—The Republic of Slovenia has made official a moratorium on the drafting of conscripts for the Yugoslav People's Army by a constitutional law, enacted at a proposal of political parties, Slovenian Premier Lojze Peterle says in a letter addressed to Federal Prime Minister Ante Markovic today.

Since July last year, the Slovenian government has been proposing to the federal government that agreement be reached on all questions related to the Yugoslav Armed Forces, including the drafting, but no talks ensued. Instead, the federal government has been taking unilateral decisions, says the letter which came in response to yesterday's proposal by the federal prime minister for Slovenia to postpone implementing its decision on the moratorium.

The Supreme Command staff of the Yugoslav Armed Forces yesterday also demanded that the drafting and all other military obligations under the Yugoslav Constitution and federal regulations be respected.

In his letter to Markovic, Peterle says that it is the duty of the Slovenian government to carry out legitimate and legal decisions of its assembly. For that reason, he adds, it will not take measures contravening these decisions.

In concluding, however, the Slovenian premier says he is prepared to engage in talks on all questions relating to the Yugoslav Army, noting that no agreement is possible "if one side rejects even to talk."

Slovene Presidency Reacts to Army Statement

AU1903202391 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1800 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] The Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia was among the first to react to today's statement by the Yugoslav Army leadership. In the absence of President Milan Kucan, the Presidency session was chaired by Ciril Zlobec and was attended by Executive Council President Lojze Peterle; Republican Assembly Vice President Vane Gosnik; and republican secretaries Igor Bavcar and Janez Jansa. We are carrying the announcement of the Slovene Presidency in full:

The unsigned statement of the Headquarters of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces as a body outside the constitutional system shows that the Armed Forces are taking measures independently from and without previous decisions by responsible bodies. By doing so, the said headquarters fails to recognize the SFRY Presidency as its supreme command and openly ignores the valid constitutional order.

The Slovene Presidency ascertains that contrary to the decision of the SFRY Presidency, which has already rejected at its session on 15 March equal proposals by the Headquarters of the Supreme Command, the latter usurps rights that do not belong to it. Headquarters' demands concerning recruits and territorial defense are contrary to the will of the Slovene people and the citizens of Slovenia, expressed at the plebiscite, that Slovenia should become an autonomous and independent state. The headquarters' statement announces the introduction of extraordinary measures that the SFRY Presidency has already rejected on Slovene territory that nobody can introduce without the consent of the Slovene Assembly.

Part of the statement obviously refers directly to Slovene threats with violent measures against legal decisions of the Slovene Assembly. Regarding these threats, Slovene authorities will take all necessary measures to defend the sovereignty of the republic.

The Slovene Presidency once again rejects the interference of the Armed Forces in solving the Yugoslav crisis. The Yugoslav People's Army may and must contribute to a peaceful and democratic agreement of the Yugoslav republics concerning their future relations by completely subordinating itself to the SFRY Presidency as its supreme command and by ceasing to interfere in the country's political life.

Bucar: Army Coup Would Prompt Secession

AU1903180491 Vienna Domestic Service in German 1700 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Interview with Slovene Assembly President Franc Bucar by Gerhard Seyfried in Klagenfurt on 19 March—recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] Slovene Assembly President Franc Bucar was in Klagenfurt today for political talks. Bucar is convinced that reason will win in Yugoslavia—even in the Army, he added.

In answer to the specific question of whether Slovenia might be affected by an Army coup, Bucar answered:

[Bucar] Long ago, the Serbian side offered to exclude Slovenia and to settle accounts with Croatia. We cannot afford such a thing for moral and political reasons.

[Seyfried] How would Slovenia react in the event of an Army coup?

[Bucar] In the event of an Army coup, Slovenia will immediately declare its independence and secede from Yugoslavia as an independent state.

[Seyfried] How do you assess the present situation in Yugoslavia? After all, there is a constitutional crisis.

[Bucar] Yes, there has long been a constitutional crisis. It is precisely the Serbs [words indistinct] have always referred to Slovenia. They do not adhere to the constitution. Now that these circles are in the minority [words indistinct].

Croatia's Tudjman Views Political Crisis Issues

LD1903183991 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1645 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Report on news conference by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman with unidentified foreign and domestic reporters in Zagreb on 19 March]

[Text] Zagreb, 19 Mar (TANJUG)—"I suggested an initiative and President Kucan, or rather the Presidency of Slovenia, agreed that we should invite the presidents of other republics to a meeting. We were prompted by the fact that the resignations of Jovic and Bucin have caused a crisis in the Yugoslav Presidency. The Presidency, however, has not ceased to exist; the majority of the presidency members have continued to work; but the resignations have made it clear that the way out of the crisis must be sought through direct talks between the presidents of sovereign republics—just as we have been advocating from the very beginning."

About 30 journalists from Europe, America, and Australia were interested to know how and when further talks will take place and whether the meeting this coming Thursday will be of the expanded SFRY Presidency or of the leaders of the republics in Zagreb or at some other venue. Some of the questions also referred to the possibility of an intervention by the Army, of a civil war and to Croatia's possible steps in response to "Krajina."

Tudjman expressed his firm belief that there will be neither Army intervention nor civil war. He stressed that attempts at army intervention have failed three times so far: at the end of last year, at the end of January, and between 12 and 15 March. Tudjman explained that the idea of an army intervention was abandoned due to "Croatia's determination to oppose it with its police forces and an appeal for a peaceful protest by the unarmed people"; to support by the official democratic public in Europe and America; and also to the fact that those who advocated such an adventure were after all in the minority and were aware that they did not have enough strength to guarantee the successful outcome of such an undertaking.

Until a decision is made that the Army stays in the barracks, i.e. that it ceases to be a factor in the process of resolving the political crisis, Tudjman is not willing to take part in expanded sessions of the federal presidency. As for a session of the republican presidents scheduled for Thursday, Tudjman informed the journalists that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, in a reply to the invitation, said that he has nothing against the meeting, but that, nonetheless, everyone should come to the expanded session of the SFRY Presidency convened for Thursday by President Jovic prior to his resignation. President Tudjman explained to the journalists that Jovic, following his resignation, and Milosevic, following his denunciation of the SFRY Presidency as incompetent, now want to take part in the work of the very same presidency.

Asked about his attitude toward the Serbian opposition, Tudjman cited a series of instances when prominent opposition leaders addressed Croatian public figures, the Croatian public, and himself asking them to support democracy in Serbia and stating that all labelling of the Croatian authorities as "Ustasha-like" by the Serbian media is lies and slander. For example, recently the leadership of Draskovic's Serbian Renaissance Movement (SPO) asked HINA [Croatian News Agency] to publish its statements to overcome the blockade in the Serbian media and to pave the way for revealing the truth about developments there. At the same time, Tudjman emphasized that the Serbian people should decide themselves about the future of Serbia and that Croatia will recognize any leadership democratically elected by the people, as it does now with Slobodan Milosevic, who was elected at the recent free elections.

Regarding Knin, the Croatian president stated that no Serbian state of Krajina will exist on Croatian territory, and that the Knin rebellion will be settled by political, legal, and, only if necessary, by police means.

Asked to comment on a statement made yesterday by Slovene Defense Minister Janez Jansa that the military leadership will reach a decision on whether to intervene pending the outcome of the referendum in the Soviet Union, Tudjman said that, despite links between dogmatic-hegemonistic forces from Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union, this is improbable. As far as future developments in Yugoslavia are concerned, he made it clear that Croatia will not remain within a "Serboslavia," if Slovenia secedes, which Greater Serbian hegemonist circles are trying to achieve so they can

settle scores with the Croats more easily. After they topple the democratic government in Croatia, it will be easy to deal with others.

Tudjman concluded: "Croatia will never again be in a subservient position. If the union of sovereign states is not accepted, then only separation is in the offing."

Zagreb Paper Doubts Military Coup Imminent

LD1903143591 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1346 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Zagreb, March 19 (TANJUG)—The daily VJESNIK, published in the Croatian capital of Zagreb, writes today that the leadership of the Yugoslav People's Army has split into "hard-liners and their opposites".

According to VJESNIK, the "soft-liners" are led by Defense Minister Gen. Veljko Kadijevic, and the hard-liners, by Chief of General Staff Gen. Blagoje Adzic.

VJESNIK learns that Gen. Kadijevic and the other members of the Federal Government last week opposed the idea of a military intervention in Yugoslavia, which Gen. Gadzic was willing to accept.

Intervention was demanded by State Presidency President Dr. Borisav Jovic after clashes between the police and demonstrators in recent unrest in Belgrade, claims VJESNIK.

VJESNIK believes that a military coup will not take place for at least two reasons—first, that the United States and most European countries have made it abundantly clear these past few days that they would not condone it, and second, that the Army realizes the danger that a coup might trigger off a civil war in the country.

Quoting informed sources, the Zagreb daily says that the Yugoslav Army leadership "inclines to a discreet coup, which it would bring about by declaring a transitional period necessary for passions to subside and for normal functioning of the state to be ensured".

VJESNIK opines that there is no "real excuse for this, as life (in Yugoslavia) is functioning" and speculates that "further provocations" might be expected in the Republic of Croatia in the coming days, aimed at "inciting inter-ethnic or other incidents".

Croatia Will Investigate Arming of Police

LD2003152191 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1414 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Zagreb, March 20 (TANJUG)—The parliament of Yugoslavia's Republic of Croatia on Wednesday set up a multiparty commission to "establish the facts connected with the arming of the police reserve force and defence of Croatia."

Earlier this year the Presidency of Yugoslavia ordered the disarming of "all paramilitary groups in the country." President of the Presidency Borisav Jovic on Friday resigned claiming, among other things, that the order had not been carried out.

Yugoslavia's top military leadership yesterday issued a statement saying it "no longer bears responsibility for the arming of paramilitary units" because the country's Presidency, in its capacity as supreme commander, did not persevere in carrying out the order.

Law Suspending Kosovo Presidency 'Implemented'

LD1903183291 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1631 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] Pristina, 19 Mar (TANJUG)—The law on the cessation of work of the presidency of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, which was adopted yesterday by the Serbian Assembly, has been fully implemented. This represents, in accordance with the Serbian Constitution and the law, the cessation of the provincial presidency.

Having previously been informed of this by Milic Miskovic, deputy president of the operational body of the republican government of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija, the president and members of the presidency left the premises and handed over the necessary documents. All other employees of the presidency did the same.

Functionaries and 30 employees of the work community of the Kosovo presidency will enjoy their rights according to the law.

Correction to Armed Forces View Defense Issue

AU1903140791

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Armed Forces View Defense Issue," published in the 19 March East Europe DAILY REPORT, page 45: Column two, seventh paragraph, first sentence, make read: ...order of 9 January 1991, the Yugoslav.... (changing month from "March" to "January")